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[THE PRINCESS EVA AND THE BARD.]

shadows flocking the slopes and meadow lands with green and gold.

No sound broke the dreamy magic of the scene save the distant cry of an unseen sea-bird, the faint whisper of the mountain trees, and the noise of a neighbouring rill, hidden by clouds of fox-gloves that seemed to nod in time to its musical murmur.

The three personages who silently surveyed this display of beauty deserve a few words of description.

The first in order as they ascended was a wild-looking peasant of powerful frame and tall stature. He was mounted on one of the small, light horses of the country, called hobbies. The saddle was of rude construction, and the bridle rein formed of a twisted thong of dried hide. His body and legs were cased in a dark woollen garment, all of a piece, fitting close to the figure, and forming hose, trunks, and jerkin. Over this a short hooded mantle of dark material was fastened at the throat, and fell from the shoulders, reaching slightly below the elbows. Shoes of untanned hide covered his feet. His head was bare, for the hood of the mantle hung unnned at his back, but the mass of matted black hair with which his large head was crowned formed at once a protection from the sun and a natural helmet capable of resisting a heavy blow. A bright steel skean, or large knife, glittered in a leather belt at his waist, and a heavy, knotted club dangled by a thong from his right wrist.

As he reached the brow of the eminence he turned his pony's head, and, waving his brown hand proudly towards the far-stretching scene, fastened his bright eyes upon his companion's, as if to note the effect upon them.

These companions were splendidly mounted on powerful black chargers, with harness ornamented with polished steel and brass.

The elder of the two was a man of athletic build and warlike bearing. His severe but handsome face was rendered even darker than its usual expression by the shadows of the jet-black plumes that surmounted his velvet cap and danced in the summer breeze. A long, flowing mantle fell from

his shoulders, hiding not only his body-dress but the housings of his horse, and leaving nothing visible but the russet boots and gilt spurs and the bright point of a steel sword-scabbard.

The other horseman was lithe and young, with light brown hair, blue eyes, and a florid face, whose winsome beauty contrasted well with the more sombre and dignified appearance of his companion. He was arrayed in the same manner, save that the plumes of his head-dress were snowy white.

"Is it not beautiful, Sir Edward?" said the young man, turning his delighted eyes from the prospect to the grave face of his companion, who was surveying the country with the calculating eye of a general rather than the pleased gaze of an admirer of nature.

"Beautiful, indeed, Malise," was the short answer, given in an abstracted manner.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed the young man, enthusiastically. "By my hopes of knighthood, it is a paradise—a home for love and beauty to nestle in—a spot of earth well worthy the defence of stout hearts and strong hands—a realm fit for gallant lording!"

At the last words the person whom he had addressed as Sir Edward started from his half abstraction, and, casting a glance of severe rebuke at the speaker, said, in a pleasant, full-toned voice that contrasted strangely with his look:

"Hut-tut, Malise! thou talkest like a doting sennachie, or a romancing gillie. The place is a fine country, and bonnie. But why speak of lording? Hasn't it defenders with strong hands and stout hearts? Where can ye find braver or more gallant? And, as for lording, it's too much of that it has. That's the black root from which its poison grows. Yet, for all thy fantastic dreamings, thou sayest well, Malise. 'Tis pity that these lovesome vales should be blackened by the foot of the foemen—that the clash of battle should ever drown the babble of the brook and the song of bird and bee—or straggling spearmen take the place of the dreaming maidens on yonder bridge."

As he turned to point to the girls on the bridge he caught the eyes of the peasant guide fastened

THE LILY OF CONNAUGHT.

CHAPTER I.

Oh, once the Harp of Innisfall
Was strong full high to notes of glad
news,
And yet it often told a tale
Of more prevailing sadness!

Campbell.

NEAR the middle of a bright summer day, in the year 1315, three horsemen, having ascended one of the lofty hills of Connaught, paused upon its summit to survey the scene beyond.

In truth the prospect was well calculated to arrest the attention of any wayfarer, for, far as the eye could reach, was spread out a varied panorama of the most enchanting beauty.

From the spot on which the party had reined in, the mountain-side, carpeted with golden moss and purple heather, sloped gradually away to a valley beneath.

Through this verdant basin a rapid river held its gurgling way, the sunshine flashing off its rippling waters, and making a little cascade formed in its course resemble tumbling snow.

A rustic bridge joined the meadows lying on either bank, and a couple of peasant girls in bright-coloured costume leaned on one of its rails gazing at the glittering current.

Beyond the stream, after some extent of level pasture land, on which many flocks and herds were scattered, the ground heaved again into grassy undulations, varied by bold hills and dark masses of forest, with here and there, cultivated openings studded with yellow-thatched cottages; while, far away at the horizon, the blue peaks of a mountain range showed through the sultry haze more like cloud-shadows than realities.

A light summer breeze swept along the valley, heaving the heather into the resemblance of dark sea-waves, wafting along the gossamers, twinkling the silver leaves of the aspen, and sporting with the crimson berries of the mountain ash. Fleecy clouds drifted across the bright, blue sky, their flitting

upon him with a fiery glance, and, changing his voice to a lighter tone, he readdressed his companion.

"But by my faith, Malise," he said, "then hast betrayed me into as mawkish dreaming as thine own. Our stout guide will think but lightly of the prowess of warriors that mourn over the prospect of armed encounter in such doleful manner. What place is this before us?" he asked, turning to the guide.

"You are in the country of the O'Connors, and look upon the domain of the kings," answered the guide, in a short, harsh manner.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the warrior, turning to gaze anew at the quiet, rural scene. "Tis more like the Arcadia than the abode of royalty and the gathering-place of armies. I thought we had not yet crossed the boundaries of Brefny and Aunsly, but the change should have advised me of it. Tis easily seen that the hand of power has shielded it.

These words were addressed to Malise, but the guide uttered a guttural sound that seemed composed of a laugh and a defiant growl.

"Right, right, sir knight," he said, in a tone of triumph. "The black foot of the Sasannach has gained no hold on the lands of O'Connor Don. King Roderick drove them back—Cathal sent them howling to their Pale."

He caught the club that dangled from his wrist, and shook it excitedly, pointing back in the direction from which they had come.

"Back! back! You must go back to find the foot-tracks of the Saxon!" he cried, in a voice so energetic that it sounded like an angry command for them to return.

His eyes flashed wildly, and his outstretched arm trembled with excitement.

The two-horsmen gazed in wonder at the passionate face of the man, so different from the dogged, silent guide of a few moments before.

"Calm yourself, man," said Sir Edward. "Why so overcome? The Saxons, were beseit them, are not in ken, and thou but bendest thy angry brows on friends!"

"Friends!" exclaimed the guide. "Such in truth I deemed ye, or I ne'er had brought ye hither—and yet, erewhile, I heard you speak of the Sasannach's footstep blackening the vale of Castle Connor."

"Thou art in error. I but said what pity it would be that such should happen."

The man turned upon him excitedly.

"Weak four sounds like ill-foreboding," he said.

"Such cannot happen while a troop can be raised in the west, or an O'Connor lives to lead them. No, by the crown of Ille, not till they bridge Shannon water with our bones."

"Well said, my gallant soldier," exclaimed Sir Edward, holding out his gauntletted hand to the guide. "The voice, like the mountain storm, breathes the spirit of liberty. With an army of such warriors as thou the O'Connor may say to the enemy—'Come!'"

The guide drew himself up proudly, his chest dilated, and his eyes met those of the knight, with a look of acknowledgment.

He dropped the club and, placing his weather-browned hand on his heart, declined the proffered gauntlet with a low bow, and silently turned his horse's head down the mountain path leading to the bridge.

The knight and his esquire, for, notwithstanding the young man's freedom of manner, such was the relation in which he stood to his companion, followed their strange guide in silence down the winding path and out on to the flats below. As they passed around the edge of a small grove the clash of arms sounded above the soft plump of their horses' hoofs in the sod, and a loud voice challenged their passage:

"Stand ho! Halt!"

At the same moment the sunlight glinted off the pikeheads and accoutrements of several men-at-arms, who threw themselves athwart the path a short distance in front of the horsemen.

The guide answered the challenge and was told to advance, which he did, and a cry of recognition greeted him.

"What, Murtough Dhu!" exclaimed the officer of the outpost, stepping toward him with extended hand. "Is it possible that thou art here? Thou hast become a stranger to us. How is it with thee, and who may be thy travelling companions?"

While yet the guide was answering the soldier's bluff questions in a low tone the knight, still wondering at the unexpected array of arms in this sylvan retreat, pricked his charger forward and came in sight of a small dwelling, used as guardhouse and nearly hidden by the overhanging foliage of the grove. The guard was small in number, but composed of daring-looking, athletic men, attired in a sort of undress, half armour, and having bushy hair and beards.

"I am called Edward, Knight of Carriek," he said, addressing the alberdier, "and this is my esquire, Malise MacCallum. We have crossed Ulster under the safe pass of the O'Neill, and enter Connaught on a mission of peace to King O'Connor."

"Welcome! and peace be with thee, Knights of Carrick. Pass forward!" said the officer, saluting by dropping his halbert point toward the earth.

The pikeman imitated the action and fell back to either side to let the horsemen pass. The knight and his esquire drew in at a few paces to await their guide, who lingered to speak with a soldier, and they were struck with surprise on looking toward the group to see the air of respectful interest with which both officer and men watched the movements and listened to the words of the wild-looking being who had conducted them thither.

In a few moments Black Murtough joined them, with a brief apology for keeping them waiting, and they proceeded in silence.

The girls on the bridge started at the sound of the hoofs, and watched the approach of the travellers with timid wonder.

They seemed to recognize Black Murtough, and merrily returned his greeting, and courtesied blushing in answer to the salutations of his plumed companion.

A half-hour's easy riding brought the party to the other side of the valley, and they commenced the ascent of verdant slopes, whose beauty and picturesqueness seemed to increase at every step.

Suddenly Black Murtough reined in his little horse and waited until they came alongside.

"There," he said, pointing to where the battlements of a tower were visible above a dark mass of trees before them. "There is Castle Connor. The wood that lies between is the King's Chase. Our way lies through it. Beyond you will see the home of the O'Connor complete."

The knight expressed his admiration of the beauty and strength of the position, and they continued their course.

CHAPTER II.

Bright as the bow that spans the stream,
In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A sun of light—a lovely form,
He comes to make glad. Campbell.

"I did not say, sir knight," resumed the guide, after a pause, "that Domhnall, the guardsman, says the king and the prince are away from the palace."

"Absent! Is it possible?"

"He says they called the clans a fortnight since, and took the field to drive back the tribes marching to join with Edward Bruce, the Scot, that would be King of them."

"What!" exclaimed the knight, with a start of surprise, his heavy brows knitting darkly as he spoke. "What, drive back the allies of the man who commands all the Irish 'gainst the Saxon?"

"The Irish need no aid!" cried Black Murtough, excitedly. "They can fight their own battles. The Scotsman comes not as a friend, but as a king. We will have no king but our own. The O'Connor drives back the idiots that would forget the crown of their country to kneel at the feet of a stranger. But, sir knight, it is not for the like of me to find fault with the hosts of my betters. They will soon return to speak for themselves. Castle Connor is ever open to the traveller and the stranger, and the Princess Eva will, doubtless, give a generous welcome to a worthy warrior."

"The Princess Eva O'Connor, the Flower of Erin," exclaimed Malise. "The fame of her beauty has reached us beyond the seas."

Neither Black Murtough nor the knight noticed his admiring exclamation, but continued their way, each wrapped up in his own thoughts, until they entered the cool aisles of the Chase, and the leafy arches shut out the bright glare of the sun.

The forest was musical with the twitter of birds and the drowsy hum of insects.

Now and then a rustling sound attracted their attention, and a frightened hare would break from cover, dart across their path and disappear into the undergrowth, or a startled fawn would raise its dappled neck to gaze at them, and then springing from its mossy bed, would bound away until lost from sight in the windings of the wood.

Soon other sounds than the twitter of birds crept along the mossy forest carpet, and coaxed through the half-transparent, golden-green foliage above.

The tramp of horses' feet, the jingle of light, silver-toned bells, and the sounds of merry voices and youthful laughter came nearer and nearer among the gnarled boles of the forest trees.

The three men involuntarily paused to await the appearance of the jocund party. Nor had they long to wait.

On a cross-path of the wood, at a very short distance from where they stood, two mounted esquires, dressed as foresters in suits of dark green, with tasseled horns and glittering spears, appeared and passed by.

After them came two gaudily attired pages, mounted on richly caparisoned horses; then several ladies in bright, flowing robes, riding palfreys, whose every proud step caused the little bells appended to the points of the horse-cloths to jingle merrily.

"The Princess Eva!" exclaimed Black Murtough, casting himself from his horse and sinking on one knee on the ground, with his head bent low in homage.

Directed by this exclamation and action, the knight and his esquire looked and saw such a vision of beauty following the cavalcade of ladies as neither had ever seen before.

It was a young girl of apparently but seventeen or eighteen years, of slight, exquisitely modelled form, as supple and graceful in every movement as a willow branch, features of angelic purity, crowned by a wealth of golden hair that shone in the subdued forest light like a halo of glory, complexion as pure as alabaster, with a soft, pink rose tint lighting up the cheeks, lips as red as the rowan, teeth like strings of Orient pearls, and eyes as blue as the skies of Italy.

A band of jewels encircled her head and kept in place the golden curl that descended to her pale fair back, flashing back the light at every movement.

Her bodice and skirt were made of bright emerald satin embroidered with gold, and a saffron-coloured mantle, fastened over the bosom by the brooch of Tara, flowed gracefully from the shoulders of this fairy-like princess.

At one side of her robes a sash, or oratory-teller, a regular appendage of the noble families of the time, and a welcome guest with high and low. The present personage was of middle age, droll in appearance and fantastically dressed.

He rode bareheaded, and seemed to be relating some humorous story, the points of which he enforced by ludicrous waves of his red-plumed cap.

This was the cause of the movement, for, as often as the drollery of the narrator forced a smile upon the sad face of the princess, the attendant ladies and pages laughed aloud.

So they passed from view, more ladies following their royal mistress, more glittering pages, two more green foresties, and four heavily-armed men-at-arms closing up the cavalcade.

Although in a position to escape notice, Sir Edward and Malise MacCallum had with simultaneous action quitted their horses, the royal maiden came in sight. In doing this they were probably influenced more by her dazzling presence and her spiritual beauty than by any thought of her high rank.

"An angel! a mist!" ejaculated the enraptured Malise as she passed from view.

"Wondrous beautiful!" said the knight.

"By Heaven!" exclaimed the young enthusiast, "it is a test of faith to think her mortal."

Black Murtough had arisen from his kneeling position over the sword and now leaned upon his horse's neck enjoying their astonishment with pleasure-flushed cheek and glowing eyes.

"The child of the O'Connor—the bud of Erin's royal tree!" he said, pride and affection quavering in his deep voice.

"They are leaving the castle?"

"But for the daily mumble," said the guide. "They go, mayhap, to the convent, or to the Fairies' Well, or to repose them at the hunting-lodge in the forest. We will on to the castle; it is long since you broke your fast and you must be hungered. You can see what the buttery contains and rest you till they come."

Signifying assent to this arrangement, as they were somewhat jaded and travel-stained, they pursued their way along the winding forest path, and, in the course of time, stood once more in the open sunlight on the edge of the Chase, gazing in admiration at a beautiful extension of the valley, in the midst of which the lofty square tower of a monastic nunnery reared its grey head from the midst of flowering trees.

On a rocky eminence at a short distance Castle Connor loomed darkly against the sky, its central tower, and its later Norman keep—a massive square structure with circular turrets at the angles—frowning down on the beholders with grim picturesqueness. The effect was greatly heightened by the hewn, or outer circles of defense.

This was a lofty, well-formed of massive wooden pickets placed upright and interlined with natural vines, which had so entwined themselves around the timbers as to form a solid and impervious barrier.

Embossures were cut in the wall high from the ground for the use of the archers and javelin-throwners in case of attack, and a gallery ran around the top, on the inside, for the purpose of enabling the defenders to cast stones and other missiles down upon the assailants.

The whole front of this defense was overgrown with ivy and bright-flowering creepers, and presented a most beautiful effect—a delightful mask for the dreadful appearances of war.

A deep, broad moat ran around the base of the castle, widening and stretching out towards the westward into a beautiful lake. A drawbridge, which was at the time lowered, communicated with

the massive iron-studded main-gate and the posts at its sides. At other parts of the wall were smaller ports, nearly hidden by the clustering vines.

On arriving at the castle Black-Mortough and his fellow travellers were welcomed by the gray-haired seneschal, who, after they had performed their ablutions and freed their garments from the dust of travel, led Sir Edward and Malise to the banqueting-hall, where a tempting repast was spread for them, and the knight-waving the rule of chivalry which obliged the captive to wait upon his master, they sat down and fell to with a will.

During the meal the seneschal corroborated the story of Dennis, the garderman that King O'Connor had led forth his forces to intercept the tribes marching to the assistance of Edward Bruce, who, since his landing in Ireland, had been joined by the O'Neils, proclaimed king, and had defeated the English in several battles, carrying terror and devastation wherever he moved.

The knight listened with angry brow to the recital, but when the old man stated that King Feidlim O'Connor had formed an alliance with the Norman General De Burgo, to tract Bruce and his followers as invaders and marauders, he arose from his seat with ill-suppressed anger.

"By the soul of my father, 'Malise!'" he said, hoarsely, "it is ill worth while that of Bruce or any other to cross the sea in the cause of people who join with their oppressors against their friends! Let me leave this place—my blood flows hot, and the air is stifling!"

The seneschal, wondering at the effect his words had upon his guest, led them to the ramparts and pointed out the notable places and beauties of the surrounding country.

Gradually the moodiness of Sir Edward relaxed under the influence of the beauteous prospect and the loquacity of the old man.

They were yet enjoying the freshness of the summer air at the elevation at which they stood, when the cavalcade of the Princess Eva emerged from the dark shadows of the Chase and wound its way towards the castle. The old man left them, to welcome his young mistress, promising to obtain them an audience as soon as possible.

They watched the near approach and entrance of the party, the Knight of Carrick viewing the beauteous Eva with grave admiration, and his young companion hanging over the battlements with fascinated gaze, as if he would have proved his idolatry by throwing himself on the court-yard stones at her paltry feet.

A long time they waited for the summons of the seneschal, but it came not, and the knight was about to descend when his steps were arrested by the sound of a harp proceeding from a wide casement below and opposite their position. Looking down, they saw sitting at the open window a man of venerable aspect, with scanty hair and long, flowing beard, as white as driven snow. He was dressed in a dark robe, that contrasted strongly with his pale features and blanched locks.

His eyes were raised, abstractedly toward the drifting summer clouds, and his fingers wandered listlessly over the strings of his harp, producing a wild, fitful fantasy, now lively, now stirring and defiant, and, anon, sinking away into that mournful cadence so peculiar to the music of Erin.

"One of the Irish bards," said Sir Edward, pausing to gaze at the patriarchal figure.

"It is Malachy, the Bard," said a voice at his elbow.

He turned quickly.

It was the seneschal, and he was about to speak to him when the old man laid his hand on his arm to enjoin silence, and pointed to the casement.

When the knight looked again the fair form of Eva O'Connor was visible opposite the harper, the two forming a beautiful contrast against the dark background of the room.

The full ripeness of year and the winter of life—the spring flush of youth and the bed of promise.

"The Princess Eva is fatigued, sir knight," said the old man, in low tone. "This is her hour of rest; she will meet you at the evening meal."

Sir Edward bowed his head and was about to move away from what he considered an act of espionage when the old man detained him and again pointed toward the window.

The harper had ceased playing and was gazing admiringly at a sheet of green satin, which two waiting maidens held before him, with an unfinished harp an-broidered on it in threads of gold.

Eva leaned against the casement listening to his words of praise with a pleased look.

"She is working a standard for her brother Desmond," whispered the seneschal. "He is to lead the clans of Kilmogorin against the usurper Bruce."

The impatient exclamation of the knight at the revival of this apparently hateful theme was checked by the sound of the harp.

The Princess Eva had seated herself on a low stool at the feet of the harper, the attendants holding the banner stretched out across her lap.

After a wild, tempestuous prelude the bard struck up

one of those old Irish tunes whose origin is lost in the obscurity of the past. This one, however, has been popularized of late years under the title of "The Wearing of the Green."

In a deep, rich voice he sang the following song, which may be appropriately styled, "The Embroidering of the Flag."

"Come, daughter, bring thy satin green and sit beside my knee,
A story of thy country's wrongs will I reveal to thee.
The lot, the shamrock, ever green, old Erin's harp entwines,
And here in golden cords restrain by those young hands of thine.
Let no weak tear-drop dim thine eye, but wear thy brow a frown,
And we'll think that every stitch you take binds some proud tyrant down.
"Long time old Erin's mighty Isle has been oppressed by foes,
Who trample on her sacred rights and scout at all her woes;
That foreigners have acted thus is not the worst to feel.
For baseborn Irishmen there are who kiss oppression's heel—
Who crook the knee and bow the head beneath the tyrant's rod,
And for an empty title sell their country and their God.
"Tens have enough to kneel before the Sons of the Pale,
Yet now, unto our troubled shore, they're called the warlike Gaels;
Oh, children of the race of Ir, where has your spirit flown,
When every stranger thinks to seize upon the Emerald Throne?
When foemen march with iron tramp, o'er moats,
To wrest the island sceptre from the grasp of Connors Dom?

"Up! up! and think upon the time that lit our lovely Isle
The traitor prince, or worthless dame, or slave had sold the soil;
When Malachy and Brian waved unconquerable swans,
And on the plain of Leinster scourged the hordes invading borders.
Think of the deeds of prowess wrought by Erin's victorious brand,
And how the Normans fled before our Cathal's iron hand!
"Then think upon your slaughtered kin and desolated homes,
And treasure up your anger till the hour of vengeance comes.
There are spears upon the mountain, there are horses in the glen,
The belated light will still be fight full thrice ten thousand men.
Then, like a whirlwind rushing forth, go fast your sacred sons,
From Galway shore to Dublin Bay, from Ballybray to Lough Foyle!"

The listeners to this rhapsody were startled by the shrill note of a bugle, awaking the echoes of the valley and fluttering away in shattered sounds along the hills; at the same time the hellas of the distant monastery broke forth in a merry peal.

The harper ceased his lay, and started to his feet; the heavy tread of armed men was heard rushing along the galleries, and the castle bell rang out its iron notes in answer to those ascending from the vale.

The Knight of Carrick and Malise turned to look for the cause of the commotion, and, gazing in the direction from which now came a many-toned blast of triumph, they saw a small body of horsemen galloping up the slope towards the castle, their steel caps and spears glittering in the sunlight.

In advance of the troopers eagerly spurred a warrior, distinguishable from the rest by the bright yellow hue of his garments and snowy plumes that flowed from his gleaming mornion. On his spear be bore a green banneret, the golden device of which flashed in the light as it waved.

A cheer of recognition and welcome rang forth from Irish soldiers thronged upon the battlements. The bugles of the garrison took up the swell of triumph, and court-yard and tower rang with the shouts of:

"Victory! Victory! Erin for ever! O'Connor Abgo!"

CHAPTER III.

Time favouring fortune keeps an upward course,
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.

—Henry VI.

"In yonder knight the king, or least of the princes," said Sir Edward, turning toward the seneschal, who, instead of sharing the general joy, was gazing sadly up to the parapet of the keep where Eva O'Connor and her ladies were assembled.

"Neither, sir knight," answered the old man. "It is the gallant Cynogeht Moran, the favourite of the O'Connor and the pride of the army. See how the villagers and clancmen throng forth to greet him."

The knight started out to witness the scene.

From every hamlet, from hall and estage, from mountain-hut and shepherd's shelting, poured forth the old and young to welcome the herald of victory. Maidens and wives hurried over the green sward towards the castle road eager for tidings of the loved ones bearing arms with the banners of the king.

Also, how many maidens to-night will hide their tear-stained faces from the light of the jubilee fires? From how many cottages will sound the wail of the widow for her fallen hero, and the cry of the orphans for the father they will see no more? How many a gray head will be bent in sorrow for the sons whose bodies are being unearthed from their shallow graves by the mountain wolves?

Yet now the children, ever eager for the notes of joy, clap their hands with delight; hill and dale echo the shouts of gladness, and the girls as they run pluck the wild flowers to cast before the feet of the bearer of glad tidings.

Such were the thoughts that passed through the mind of the Knight of Carrick as he gazed at the exciting scene below.

"The young warrior is a wondrous pet with the people," said the seneschal. "Not a little of this joy is in his own account, for-bye the good news he bears. She has recognized him too."

The knight followed the old man's gaze to the brow of the keep, and saw the Princess Eva standing in one of the embrasures, holding to the coping with one hand while with the other she waved a white scarf that fluttered far upon the breeze.

Her figure was proudly erect; her pale face flushed, her blue eyes sparkled with joyous triumph, and her wealth of golden hair floated on the wind like the bright train of a meteor.

The approaching knight had caught sight of the scarf, for he waved his green pennon thrice around his head and drooped it low in salute. The soldiers on the walls rent the air with a hoarse cheer of enthusiasm, and the crowd upon the hillside swelled the greeting to O'Connor's child.

The Knight of Carrick turned to the old man with the infectious excitement sparkling in his eyes.

"Never, sir seneschal," he said, "never within a lady thrilled the heart of returning knight with loving welcome!"

The old man turned away with a sigh.

"Alas, for their young hearts!" he said, "such greeting bodes no good. Evil betide the hour they think of love!"

Soon the castle guards, with glittering pikes and armour, ranged themselves at either side of the drawbridge and across the court-yard to the portals of the castle.

Amid loud cheers from the men-at-arms upon the walls and the crowding retainers without, the young warrior and his escort dashed gallantly up the road and across the bridge, the thunder of their horses' hoofs and the clatter of accoutrements resounding from court-yard, tower, and fosse.

As they rode between the lines of grim warriors the young knight answered the shout of salutation by waving his pennon and crying aloud the single word:

"Victory!"

Then the bugles swelled forth the notes of triumph, and from rampart and tower rose enthusiastic cheers and shouts of rejoicing, and the tones of exultation were caught up by the people without, and spread away over hill-side and vale.

"Victory! Victory! O'Connor for ever! Erin go Bragh!"

The Princess Eva and her ladies had descended from the battlements, and were seen advancing to the entrance of the castle-hall in dazzling array, preceded by the white-haired seneschal and the chamberlain of the palace.

The hall was very spacious. A rich carcase ran around the ceiling, which was brilliantly ornamented with trophy of burnished metals. The walls were hung with trophies of the battle and the chase, and a matting, interwoven of rushes dyed in many colours, covered the stone floor.

At the entrance the seneschal and the chamberlain drew to either side, and the princess advanced to the head of the broad steps. The next moment the armour of the herald of victory met at her knight, and, laying his pennon at her feet, raised the embroidered hem of her robe to his lips.

"Royal lady," he said, "praise be to heaven, victory is ours!"

A flush of pleasure swept across the fair face of the princess, and her blue eyes sparkled brightly as she extended her jewelled hand.

"Nay, nay, sir warrior!" she said. "It is not meet that thy glorious pennon should be laid upon the earth. The golden falcon of Sir Conchect Moran wears victoriously. Welcome, herald of glad tidings!"

The warrior respectfully kissed the jewelled fingers and, rising, handed his lance and pennon to his esquire, who stood by, bearing his shield of burnished steel. Its device was a falcon in full flight, with a ribbon fluttering from its beak, on which was inscribed the word "Forward."

The very perfection of youthful knighthood was Connacht Moran. He was of stately height and powerful frame, but lithe as a panther and graceful as a mountain ash. His features were of noble cast, and his dark eyes shone with the spirit of heroism. His cheeks were embrowned by exposure, but on removing his morion the forehead showed marble white, contrasting strongly with the glossy locks of raven blackness that swept down to his mailed shoulders.

He wore a saffron-coloured tunic, and knit trunks, over which a light suit of steel armour sat easily. No ornament adorned his person save the golden buckle of his baldric, and a broad sash of green silk that crossed his breast and was knotted below the hilt of his heavy sword.

"Noble princess," he said as he led her toward the audience room, "with such welcome as this beyond the dark river death were a pleasant journey."

A rich blush suffused the cheeks of the princess as they passed between the folding-doors, held open by ushers bearing white staves tipped with silver.

Several ornated seats occupied the slightly raised dais at the head of the apartment. In one of these the princess seated herself, waving the warrior to another, which he declined with a low obeisance.

"Pardon me, princess," he said. "The honourable duty with which I am entrusted permits not of delay. I can but report the success of our arms. Victory once more perches on the standard of O'Connor. Our enemies are scattered like ocean drift. The king and princes return in glory, accompanied by the stout knight De Birmingham, who shared the triumph, and I have been sent to prepare the welcome. 'Tis the royal word that the castellan call forth the warriors to man the walls, and order the servitors to prepare the feast and decorate the palace in honour of his guest."

He turned to look for the official as he spoke, and saw the seneschal approaching, in company with the Knight of Carrick, followed at a respectful distance by his esquire, Malise MacCallum.

The knight bowed low before the princess as he was announced, and in a few musical words she welcomed him and apologized for the delay in his reception.

"Nay, noble lady," he said, with a smile, "with me lies the duty of excuse, and I now appear before you but to beg forgiveness for an innocent intrusion where my presence is so little likely to be welcomed, and to say farewell."

The Princess Eva gazed at the speaker with a look of surprised inquiry.

"Sir knight, I understand thee not," she said. "The gates of Castle Connor are ever open to the wayfarer, and our hospitality has never suffered breach. Those who come in friendship are ever welcome."

"I know not, lady, if I shall be viewed as foe or friend," he answered. "I have entered the country of the O'Connors as an ambassador to offer alliance from Lord Edward Bruce, but find the king, your father, has entered compact with the Saxon, the enemy of both the Scot and Irishman. Better that I retire than mar by my presence the enjoyment of a triumph in which I cannot join."

"Now ill betide the day, sir knight," she said, with smiling warmth, "when the walls of our house shall suffer the stain of inhospitality. The king would disclaim his daughter did nightfall see a stranger shake off the dust upon the threshold of Castle Connor. As their representative, I command thy stay, and deliver thee over to the gentle custody of a brother warrior, Sir Connacht Moran."

The Knight of Carrick bowed low, and smiled at the pleasant assumption of severity, saying:

"Princess, I am the slave of thy command."

With a smile, she waved her hand through the casement toward the glowing West, and continued:

"See, the sun is low in the heavens, and there already rise the dust-clouds from their hoofs, and the glitter of their spears gem the horizon."

Sure enough, away to the south and south-west appeared a dark bank that resembled the lifting of a storm-cloud, and was shortly glittering in its whole length like the sparkle of the sun on a high, rolling tide.

Then the deep tones of the castle bell rang out once more, answered by the mellow cadences coming from the tower of the wood-embosomed monastery.

Suddenly the warder's horn pealed out, followed by the clash of arms and the clatter of accoutrements.

Then, above the cheers of retainers and guardians, came rolling from the advancing army the beat of the war drums and the blare of bugles, shattering the echoes, scaring the birds in frightened flights to the distant mountains, and causing the grazing cattle to scamper to the shelter of the groves.

As if by magic, the turrets and battlements were festooned with flowers, and the green flag of Erin floated gallantly over the keep of Castle Connor.

First advanced a mass of troops formed of En-

glish and Irish horsemen, distinguishable from each other by the difference of their arms and the colours of their banners and clothing. The superior size and strength of the English horses were particularly noticeable.

At the head of this combined troop rode two warriors of noble appearance.

The one on the right was a powerful man, past the middle age, with a stern face, wild, piercing eyes and brows, and beard as dark as night. His dress, seen through the openings of his mail, was of purple velvet, his armour jet-black, ornamented with tracery of gold. His gleaming helmet was surmounted by glossy black plumes, and surrounded by a wreath of trefoils, with sprigs of gold and leaves formed of emeralds.

This was Fedlim O'Connor—monarch of Ireland.

By his side rode a knight much younger than himself—much taller, and contrasted with him by his florid complexion and light auburn hair and beard.

Such was Sir Richard De Birmingham, one of the bravest and most successful of the Norman-English generals.

Behind them galloped mass after mass of horsemen, with glittering lances and flaunting banners.

Away to the left could be seen the gallows-glasses, or heavy-armed troops, under the command of the fiery Desmond O'Connor, marching in solid column with the red sunlight flashing off their ponderous axes and pike heads.

On the right rode Prince Brazil at the head of the light-armed kerns, or javelin men; then, far away in irregular masses, came camp followers and bearers of the dead and wounded, and the tremulous wail of the bereaved ones, who had rushed to seek those they loved, crept shudderingly over the mead.

Then the loud hymn of triumph burst forth from the harpers and maidens that issued from the castle hall, and the drawbridge was already trembling beneath the steeds of the king and the Norman knight whom the princes had joined, when there arose a sudden commotion and loud cries in the courtyard, and a warrior with closed visor and naked sword burst through the throng of choristers and dashed out upon the bridge.

"Back, Sir Richard De Birmingham! Back, on your lives!" he cried, wildly, waving his sword and shield aloft. "Gentlemen of England, ye are betrayed; the faithless Irish have given you over to death!"

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE INK PLANT.—Botanists are engaged in planting all over Europe a new plant imported from New Granada, which, if grown successfully, will be a formidable rival to our manufactured ink. It is known as the "Coriaria Shymofolia" or ink plant. The juice which escapes from it has been given the name of "Changi," and is a little red in colour, but in the space of a few hours after exposure to the air turns into an intense black. This liquid does not corrode steel pens as the ink in ordinary use, resists chemical substances, and preserves its intensity for many years.

ANOTHER SUBSTITUTE FOR WOOD ENGRAVING.—A new process of wood engraving is called the "planotype." The design to be engraved is transferred to a block of lime-tree wood, which is then placed in a machine having somewhat the appearance of a carving-machine—the shape of which varies considerably, according to the nature of the work—the graver being kept red hot by a gas-jet. By means of this appliance the design is gradually burnt into the wood. Figures or letters of reference are impressed by means of punches. The whole design having been burnt into the wood, a cast in type metal is taken direct from the block; without any farther preparation the cast may be used for printing from, like an ordinary stereotype plate. It is said that the wood does not suffer in the slightest degree from the heat of the molten metal, and that the finest details are faithfully reproduced. The process is carried out on a large scale, and is found to give most satisfactory results.

NEW FORM OF GALVANIC CELL.—K. Kohlfurst has devised an arrangement of a copper and zinc battery which, he states, will, if used for ringing electric bells, give a sufficient current for a year, at the cost of 1½ lb. of crystals of sulphate of copper. A truncated cone is thoroughly varnished inside, filled with crystals of sulphate of copper, and placed mouth downwards in a glass cylinder deeper than itself. This cone has notches round the rim, and has a small hole in the centre of the top. The positive pole is a thick cake of zinc suspended over the face of the cone, cast with a hole in the centre, through which passes a gutta-percha covered wire, making the connection with the copper side of the battery. The glass cylinder is then filled with water, when it is evident that the rate of solution of the sulphate depends on the

facility with which it is dissolved by the access of water through the notches in the cone, and this taking place at a uniform rate the electric current arising from the mutual action of the copper and zinc in a solution of a given strength will be uniform also. The strength of the current is said to be increased if instead of water a dilute solution of sulphate of magnesia or of common salt is used.

PAPER AND CLOTH FROM SLATE.—The invention of Mr. John Sellars, of Droylesden, near Manchester, consists in the employment of ordinary slate, or the mineral from which the slate is quarried in Wales and other places, in a state of fine dry powder or of fine wet pulp, and using it in both conditions as articles of commerce, either with or without the addition of any colouring matter. The slate of different colours is selected as desired, and ground to any degree of fineness in the dry or moist state, and this powder, or pulp, in its natural colour is well adapted for hardening and weighting cotton or other cloth or yarns in the sizing-machine when mixed with flour, starch, or other pasty or gummy substance, or any other mineral or weighting material may be added thereto at the option of the user. The dry powder, or moist pulp, whether coloured or not, can be used in the manufacture of paper, either used alone or in combination with china clay or other similar substance for giving weight or colour, or both weight and colour. The dry powder or moist pulp can be coloured to any tint required, and be used in the manufacture of pigments or colours, either alone or in combination with barytes or similar substances, such as are now or may be in use, at the option of the manufacturer.

MY BALD HEAD.

Good friends! pray listen, if you please,
To Pleasure's licensed preacher;
Hold fast to Liberty and Ease—
So says your reverend teacher.
To laugh at Care, be gay and free,
Her precepts I advise.
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So listen to the wise!
Good friends! when Care assails a man,
To vex his soul and body,
I think it much the wisest plan
To drown it—in a toddy!
Nay, not too much!—the glass should be
Of very dainty size.
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So listen to the wise!
Good friends! these hints will stand
the test,
And shouldn't be neglected;
But what's the good of all the rest?
If Beauty is rejected?
Young Love—true love—must ever be
The richest earthly prize.
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So listen to the wise!
Good friends! believe me, only so
We save Life's truest treasures.
By just condensing as they flow
Youth's evanescent pleasures.
My sermon's done; who lists to me
The power of Fate defies.
I'm bald because I'm sage, you see;
So listen to the wise!

J. G. S.

It is stated that the reports as to Dr. Turner having resigned the deanship of Winchester, worth £1,500. a year, which he has held since the year 1800, are premature. The very rev. gentleman is in his 95th year.

The famous prison for debt in the Rue de Clichy, Paris, has just been sold. Nine tenders were sent in, the highest of which was that of M. Lapouye, contractor, who became the purchaser at 92,510fr. It has cost many a former inhabitant much more even to get inside of it.

THE SEA SERPENT.—The existence of the sea-serpent is not a merely modern belief. In a note on Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," act 5, scene 2, Chalmers' edition, 1805, we read:—"Worm is the Teutonick word for serpent; we have the blind-worm and slow-worm still in our language, and the Norwegians call an enormous monster, seen sometimes in the Northern Ocean, the sea-worm."

MICHAEL ANGELO'S DAVID.—It is stated that Michael Angelo's statue of David is to be removed by Signor Francesco Borrà, at a cost of 20,000fr., into a pavilion, specially built and designed for its reception by Chev. De Fabris, at an estimated expense of 53,000fr., which may, perhaps, be exceeded by another 20,000fr. If so, the total cost will have amounted to close upon 100,000fr. It would be a difficult rule-of-three sum to inquire what is the precise value set by the Italian government on the statue of David.



[FOR DEAR LIFE.]

M A R I G O L D.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Image in the Heart," "Sweet Elynantine,"
"The Three Passions," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.

Byron.

The moments passed with a sluggishness that was perfectly awful, as they always do when a man's life hangs on a hair, for in such times they acquire gigantic proportions.

Izard was not less anxious than the other two, because he had a startling interest in the mysterious and doubtful drama that was being enacted under his eyes.

If Arthur Everton were lucky enough to kill Quirino he would be safe, but if the fortune of war went against his sister's husband he had to dread an untimely fate.

The cowardly fellow trembled violently and was in an agony of terror, which was however a little decreased by a voice that whispered almost in his ear:

"Don't move, sir, but answer me a question. Speak as gently as possible, in case we should be overheard. Do you understand?"

The gipsy's heart bounded in his breast.

"Yes, yes," he replied, eagerly. "Take pity upon me whoever you are! I am innocent of any crime! For heaven's sake pity me!"

"I am the driver of the carriage," was the answer, "and I can see that you have a good chance of being utterly lost."

"I know it, unless you help me. What do you want? Every man has his price. I always had mine, and I generally went cheap."

There was a tone of irony in these words, which however was lost upon the matter-of-fact coachman.

"Will you give me two gold pieces?" said the latter.

"Will I give you two?" replied Izard, quickly. "You shall have a dozen if you will cut these cords."

"Twelve!" repeated the man, in a tone of intense covetousness. "Where is the money?"

"In my pocket. Take it—help yourself; goodness knows I have no wish to cheat you."

The man slowly crept up to him through the brushwood and placed his hand in Izard's pocket, from which he took the promised recompence, then he cut the cords that bound him and said:

"Get through the hedge, where there is a hole."

"Take me back with you," exclaimed Izard as he found himself free. "You can do so, as you have your carriage waiting."

The driver shook his head violently and ran off, leaving the gipsy by himself.

For a moment he had a strong inclination to follow his example, but a species of fascination chained him to the spot.

He could not go until he had seen the result of the strange duel between Quirino and the son of Lord Kimbolton.

Nearly half an hour elapsed and neither of the combatants made any sign. The suspense became intolerable to Arthur Everton, who was cramped and uncomfortable from crouching so long in the same position. He wanted to move, but was afraid to make the least motion in the bushes, for the agitation of the boughs which would result must infallibly attract the attention of his terrible enemy, who boasted that he never missed his aim.

Suddenly Arthur saw a formidable adder, which was of a venomous species, well known and much dreaded in the South of France. It was suspended by its flexible tail to a branch on a level with his head and fixed a look upon him which possessed all the fascination for which snakes are so famous in all countries.

An all-absorbing fear took possession of the young man which made him temporarily forgetful of the horrors and dangers of his situation.

He threw himself backward, and, raising his weapon, struck the reptile on the head, knocking it some paces off, so that he had nothing more to fear from it.

But in doing so he exposed his head above the level of the brushwood which had hitherto concealed him effectually.

This was enough for Quirino.

A report sounded, and Arthur Everton, dropping his weapon, fell heavily back on the hard ground, uttering a terrible cry.

Quirino bounded forward from his hiding-place.

By this time Izard had seen enough.

"My sister is a widow," he murmured, adding, sarcastically: "She has only me now, and I ought to do what I can to preserve my valuable life for her sake."

Creeping through a hole in the hedge, he reached the main road and ran as fast as he could, enveloped in a cloud of dust, towards Marseilles.

Quirino stood over his victim, who lay in a pool of blood. The ball had lodged in his left breast, he was still and motionless, while the blood gushed forth in a stream from a frightful wound, and he exhibited no sign of life.

A cloud crossed the brow of Quirino.

"What has he done to me that I should have revenged myself thus?" he exclaimed; "the unhappy man did not even know that he had offended me."

Kneeling down, he put his hand upon his victim's heart, in which he was not able to detect the slightest pulsation.

"Is he dead?" he said, in a tone of remorse.

Rising to his feet, the old vengeful, defiant expression chased away the look of pity. He was once more the truculent savage that he had shown himself.

"I have kept my oath," he continued. "This man was not in fault, yet I have killed him. Now for the gipsy. He too shall die."

Turning to the place where he had left Izard, he was surprised to see nothing but the pieces of cut rope which the fellow had left behind him.

"He has escaped," he cried, furiously. "I should have dispatched him at once. But, by heavens, I will find him."

We must leave Quirino standing by the dead body of Arthur Everton, watching for the least movement to indicate that a spark of vitality remained.

"If," said he, "I could undo my work I would gladly do so. Perhaps he may revive. I will staunch the blood. He may not be dead after all."

There seemed however but faint hope that Arthur would ever be able to thank him for the change in his sentiments.

To all appearance the spirit had for ever fled to a happier and better land.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Angel: Woe! Woe! eternal woe!
Not only the whispered prayer
Of love
But the imprecations of hate
Reverberate
For ever and ever through the air
Above!

This fearful curse *Long fellow.*
Snakes the great universe!

The long legs and wandering experience of the gipsy stood him in good stead. He had never coursed along before with such fantastic and wonderful rapidity, more resembling a race-horse or a locomotive than a man. He seemed to have the fabulous wings which Mercury, the god of thieves, is said to have had attached to his heels.

The perspiration poured down his face like water, the dust blinded him, strange noises sounded in his ears, his breath came from him in short gasps—he was half suffocated, but he did not stop.

In about twenty minutes he reached Marseilles, and a short time longer sufficed to take him to the water side, where Carmen was waiting for him, feverish with impatience and pale with anger.

For three quarters of an hour she had waited, half distracted at seeing nothing of Izard or Arthur, and more especially annoyed when at the time ap-

pointed the "Marigold" weighed anchor and stood out to sea.

Directly Izard appeared she seized his arm, and pointing to the noble vessel, which was rapidly growing smaller in the distance, exclaimed:

"Look! The ship has gone! Our passage is lost, and we are ruined!"

Then, casting her eyes upon the gipsy, she saw that his face denoted the most abject terror. He was covered with perspiration and dust. His hands trembled, his clothes were torn, and she added, with a look of fear:

"What has happened to you? Where is Arthur?"

Izard made her no answer, but walked up to a group of boatmen, who, standing near, seemed to be waiting for a job.

Taking a handful of gold from his pocket, he exclaimed, in a hoarse voice:

"This money for any of you who will take me to the 'Marigold' which has just sailed."

The boatmen looked at one another.

Evidently the task was a difficult one. It would be a struggle of arms against sails and wind; though not impossible it was an enterprise at once audacious and unprecedented.

Nevertheless an old sailor whose age had not impaired his vigour answered for his three companions:

"We will try our best, sir, though I won't promise you we shall succeed. Jump into our boat quickly. Too much time has been lost already. If the wind rises we've no chance."

Izard took Carmen by the arm and forced her into the boat.

The sailors seated themselves and pushed off.

"Stop, stop!" she cried. "Where is Arthur? We cannot go without him. I will not sail without Arthur!"

The oars dipped in the water in obedience to a signal from Izard, and the boat began to fly along.

Carmen wrung her hands, and kept on saying:

"Where is Arthur? Do you want to drive me mad? Where is my husband?"

"It is owing to a miracle you see me alive," answered Izard. "Quirino found us. He has kept his word, and revenged himself. Arthur Everton is dead!"

Carmen uttered a piercing shriek. She placed her hand to her heart, her eyes closed, and she sank, pale and rigid as a corpse, at the bottom of the boat.

"I am glad of that; she will be quiet now," exclaimed Izard. "Poor thing. It is a sad blow to her, but she should have restrained her ambition. See what it has led us into. Yet she is a widow of a gentleman, and may marry again. She is decidedly Mrs. Everton, and Lord Kimbolton cannot take that satisfaction away from her, even if he should refuse to receive her as his son's lawfully married wife."

Luckily the "Marigold" did not make much way, as the wind only blew in fitful gusts, and the boat gained upon her, propelled as it was by four stalwart oarsmen, who exerted themselves to the utmost in the chase.

When they had rowed some miles Izard displayed a small white flag which attracted the attention of Captain Griffiths, who hove to.

"Row, my fine fellows—row for your lives," exclaimed Izard, delighted. "We shall soon be alongside."

When the ship was reached, Carmen, still insensible, was handed up the side.

The gipsy paid the boatmen, and stood on the deck of the "Marigold," feeling that he had escaped Quirino.

Addressing the captain, he said:

"Will you kindly have Mrs. Everton conveyed to the cabin which you have prepared for her? She is unwell."

"I fancied something must have happened," replied Captain Griffiths, "when I was obliged to sail without you. I hope nothing serious has occurred, Where is the Honourable Mr. Everton?"

"It is horrible," said Izard, pretending to be greatly affected. "My unfortunate sister will never get over it. Mr. Everton has been assassinated!"

Captain Griffiths started back in amazement.

"Yes," continued Izard, "I narrowly escaped with my life. We were decoyed into a nest of robbers, and Arthur lost his life."

Every one on board sympathised very much with the brother and sister, especially the latter, who had received a severe shock to the system.

Mercedes had been sent on board by Marshall, and when she heard the story her woman's heart was profoundly touched.

She had felt some interest, as we know, in Arthur Everton, and she was deeply grieved at his untimely end.

Establishing herself in Carmen's cabin, she did all that lay in her power to alleviate the misery she was suffering.

By degrees Carmen grew calmer. She reflected that had Arthur lived, after being informed by Quirino how shamefully he had been entrapped into a marriage with a street singer and dancing girl of low extraction, he would have cast her off with a thousand reproaches.

She had partly achieved the object of her ambition, for she had been the wife of a gentleman, and was consequently a lady.

A strong intimacy sprang up between Carmen and Mercedes, who became very fond of her new friend. Of course Carmen invented a story of her life to please Mercedes, saying nothing about her vagabond career, but declaring that her brother, who adhered to the name of Caruthers, was very rich, and they belonged to an old English family.

Mercedes had heard from her father all about the feud between Lord Kimbolton and Frank Anglesey, and in conversation one day she remarked:

"Both the Kimboltons and the Angleseys are unlucky. It is strange that his lordship's only child should die so young."

"Mr. Anglesey is the rich merchant of Bristol with whom you are going to stay, dear, is he not?" said Carmen.

"Yes. He and papa are such old friends."

"Do you think your father, Mr. Marshall Chabot, will go to England after you?" asked Carmen.

"Frankly, no. He is old and is much immersed in business, though he would like to see Mr. Anglesey very much. They are like brothers, and no wonder—the history of their friendship is quite a romance."

"Is it? Do please tell it me," Carmen cried.

"If you wish it I will do so with pleasure," returned Mercedes. "You must know that Lord Kimbolton's first wife was named Marigold; she had been engaged to Frank Anglesey, but they told her he had died in India. This was not true; he lived and came back to England."

"Of course they met," replied Carmen.

"Very naturally, but unhappily Anglesey intruded himself upon Marigold one night and was surprised by her husband."

"Did he kill them?"

"You shall hear; Marigold waited in the corridor, and Anglesey, to shield her, declared that he had come into the house to rob it. Lord Kimbolton took him at his word and had him imprisoned for twelve months."

"How sublime! That is a man I could die for," exclaimed Carmen, enthusiastically.

"My father," continued Mercedes, "would not leave his friend Mr. Anglesey, but saw him constantly, and afterwards went abroad with him, where he again saw Marigold. Suddenly her husband disappeared, and was said to have been assassinated at Venice. Then she married Captain Anglesey."

"But Kimbolton lives."

"Exactly. He had been carried off and shut up in a prison by Anglesey, but he escaped and vowed a terrible vengeance. In vain Anglesey fled from him. Marigold had a child—a sweet little daughter. It was stolen from her, and was supposed to have been carried off by gypsies."

"Gypsies!" ejaculated Carmen, involuntarily.

"Yes. The loss of her child, which was undoubtedly taken from her by Lord Kimbolton's orders, drove her mad. She is alive, and Anglesey loves her as fondly as ever, but the doctors say she will never—if at all—recover her senses unless she finds her lost child."

"And Kimbolton married again," said Carmen, much interested in this recital.

"He did," Mercedes answered, "and became an owner of race-horses and a speculator on the turf. He has lost nearly all his fortune. Arthur Everton was his only son. His death will be a great blow to him. Indeed, he is unlucky."

"Has Mr. Anglesey any children?"

"None, except the missing girl, though he has adopted a boy named Ralph, who is now, they tell me, a handsome young fellow, and will inherit all his wealth."

"Oh, you blush," exclaimed Carmen, with a woman's quickness divining a secret.

"Shall I tell you why, dear?" replied Mercedes.

"Am I not your friend? Would I keep any secret from you?" said Carmen.

"I will trust you with my little secret. Papa wishes me to marry Ralph if I can like him, and Ralph—so Mr. Anglesey says in his letters—is looking forward for my arrival, and is quite willing to make me his wife. There, now you know all about it, dear Carmen, and I hope when we arrive in Bristol that you will come with me to Mr. Anglesey's and give me your opinion about Ralph."

"I hope for your sake he will be as nice as my poor, dear Arthur," answered Carmen, bursting into tears.

Mercedes kissed her with sisterly affection, and said:

"How you must suffer, for you were so happy with him. Tell me, dear, does marriage bring happiness to a woman?"

"Oh, yes," replied Carmen. "It did to me, because my husband and I loved each other so fondly." Both girls fell into a deep reverie.

After the expiration of a quarter of an hour Mercedes said:

"Why are you so dull, dear Carmen?"

"I cannot help thinking of Marigold and her lost child. What fate may it not have encountered among the gypsies! Ah, how cruel of Kimbolton to revenge himself upon a helpless woman."

"That is his character," said Mercedes.

"I shall not like him, though I loved his son," continued Carmen. "I wish poor Marigold could find her daughter and recover her sense."

"Then," remarked Mercedes, "Mr. Anglesey would be happy. Though he is so wealthy they say he never smiles, and is a most melancholy man. It is a sad story."

For hours the girls conversed together, and Carmen was soon thoroughly well acquainted with the history of Marigold, for whom she began to entertain a profound pity.

"What a future," she thought to herself, "would the missing child have if she were recovered from the gypsies who stole her. Both Frank Anglesey and Marigold would be in estates, and she would be the sole heiress of all the rich Bristol merchant's wealth."

During the voyage Izard and Captain Griffiths became great friends. The captain paid him considerable attention as a relation of Lord Kimbolton, through his sister's marriage, and also because as Mr. Caruthers he was the representative of an old English family.

All went well with the ship until she reached the Bristol Channel; there the winds were contrary and the sea ran high.

Izard was happy. He no longer feared Quirino, and hoped that Carmen, with her talent for intrigue, would soon establish herself in a position which would give them both money and respectability.

A dead calm, when almost within sight of land, caused the "Marigold" to lie idly on the waste of waters. Her sails were flapping lazily against the masts, and the older sailors shook their heads gravely as they prognosticated a calamity.

After dining together Izard and the captain played at cards, the gipsy contriving to win—thanks to the admirable sleight of hand which enabled him to do what he liked with the honour.

The first mate knocked at the door and, entering, said that he wished to call the captain's attention to the state of the weather, which he did not like at all.

Griffiths quitted the cabin, followed by Izard, who at once turned pale at the prospect of danger—his courage always oozing out of his finger ends when put to the test.

The first glance that Captain Griffiths took at the sky showed him that the mate's apprehensions were not without foundation.

The air was calm, but nevertheless the sky and the sea presented a strange appearance.

Above the vessel the firmament was beautifully clear, and myriads of stars danced in infinite space.

At the verge of the horizon, on the contrary, thick banks of clouds were gathering, forming a black and stormy line. In the middle of the clouds appeared the rising moon, then full, looking like a red and sombre spot. This blood-like spot presented a strange appearance in its frame of ebony, which enlarged itself minute by minute, seeming to rise out of the sea for the purpose of scaling the heavens.

The clouds appeared to course along overhead with incredible swiftness, and yet not a breath of air caused a ripple on the sea. The flag of the mainmast hung down perpendicularly and the flame of a lighted candle in a peep-lantern did not flicker in the least.

Presently the sea broke into little hurried waves round about the ship, created with phosphorescent light. The sea appeared to be boiling. Only about six leagues separated the ship from a coast which is at all times dangerous.

The captain took in all we have described at a glance, and his countenance fell.

"Is there any danger?"

"Of course there is," replied Griffiths, roughly. "How can there be a storm without danger? Say your prayers if you know any, for a prayer at sea, they say, is never thrown away."

Izard racked his memory. He did not recollect having ever learned a prayer. It was a part of his education that had been sadly neglected.

"Shall I tell you a supplication I once heard a sailor make?" said the captain.

"Yes. Teach it to me. I will go below and repeat it," answered Izard, whose knees began to knock against each other.

"It is very simple. The wind was blowing great guns in the Bay of Biscay. The sailor was a poor,

uneducated fellow, and he exclaimed : "Oh, Heaven, have mercy upon us; our ship is so small, and your sea is so large."

"Very pretty indeed. I shall think of that when we near land," answered Izard.

Turning to the mate, Griffiths exclaimed :

"Order all the crew forward to be ready when the tempest rises."

The order was given, and the men grouped together scanned the horizon and conversed in whispers.

The bubbling of the sea increased momentarily. The entire surface of the ocean assumed a remarkable luminosity, and a shrill whistling through the cordage was heard, bearing a strong resemblance to the working of the bellows in a forge.

On the verge of the horizon the black line continued to ascend until the crimsoned moon was entirely drowned in the inky sea.

Suddenly they heard a heavy, rolling noise like the distant discharge of a park of artillery, and at the same time the black line enlarged itself, stretching out in the shape of an open fan, and covering the armament completely.

There, as if it was a signal for the storm to begin, a heavy clap of thunder burst overhead with startling distinctness.

At this signal all the elements responded at once.

A sheet of fire lit up the accumulated clouds and seemed to envelope them in its lambent embrace. The ocean heaved and bristled with huge waves. From the four quarters of the heavens the winds came with appalling shrieks, resembling the cries of the lost souls who people the abode of the doomed.

Attacked by such a powerful assault the vessel spun round like a top launched from the hand of a child, trembling from stem to stern and reeling like a drunken man, groaning and creaking as her timbers were being violently wrenching asunder, while a huge wave overwhelmed her like a flood and in retiring tore away part of the cordage and the bulkheads.

Running before the wind, which increased in fury, the unhappy ship, though under poles, did not seem to require any sail, but she was going in the direction of the coast, and the storm threatened to dash her in pieces against the rocks.

Vainly Captain Griffiths exerted all his skill to put her about and regain the open sea.

A monstrous wave exceeding all that had preceded it in size came broadside on, smashing the rudder and carrying away the man at the helm. The masts went by the board with a terrible crash.

Raising his hands to his mouth to make a speaking trumpet, the captain exclaimed :

"All hands cut away the wreck."

Working with short-handled axes, the crew left the masts and cordage slide overboard, which enabled the ship to right herself, but she still ran before the wind and hurried towards the coast.

Again the captain raised his voice, saying :

"Man the boats."

His example encouraged the crew, for he did not show the least sign of fear.

Descending the main hatch, he sought the ladies' cabin and found Mercedes on her knees, wretched in prayer, for the imminence of their danger had been communicated to them by Izard, who, a coward himself, alarmed them by his wild language and trembling limbs.

Carmen, on the contrary, was pale but self-possessed. There was something grand to her in this war of the elements, and she was no素e a believer in her fate or destiny that she fancied she would not die young or that some miracle would intervene to save her.

"Is there any hope, captain?" asked Mercedes, rising and regarding him fixedly.

"None," replied Captain Griffiths. "I do not say this to alarm you, miss, and add to your distress, but we are drifting to the coast and must go to pieces in about an hour."

"My poor father. How he will grieve," she sighed.

"I have ordered the boats to be launched," continued the captain. "Will you make your preparations, for in five minutes we shall start in two parties and try to save our lives?"

"We will be ready," replied Carmen, to whom all did not seem lost.

The captain left them alone, and Mercedes, who was overwhelmed with grief, threw herself into her arms, saying :

"At least we will die together, dearest."

She was calm but hopeless, and Carmen endeavoured to comfort her.

"Hold this for me, dear," said Mercedes, giving her a little silver casket. "It contains my jewellery and letters from my father, Wilfred Marshall Chabot, to Frank Anglesey. We will take it with us in the boat in case we escape from this horrible storm, and now let us supplicate Heaven again until we are sent for."

Both girls sank on their knees, but though Mercedes's lips moved in heartfelt prayer, Carmen's were dry and motionless.

Even at that supreme moment she was plotting. "I have her jewels, her letters," she said to herself. "Neither Mr. Anglesey nor Marigold, who is no one, because she is mad, nor their adopted son, Ralph, has ever seen Mercedes. I am as lovely. If she should die why should not I take her place and gain the millions which Frank Anglesey can give to Ralph's wife on his marriage? I have lost one husband, I must gain another."

She regarded the unsuspecting girl by her side with the ferocity of a tigress, as if she wished her dead and could have killed her with her own hand.

"Besides," she added, "I should lose my identity as Mercedes Marshall, and if Quincino followed me to England he would never know me in my new name."

She mistook Quincino's nature, for if ever there was a bloodhound in human shape it was the vindictive fisherman whom she had had the misfortune to offend:

CHAPTER XI.

From these dolt thy mortal weed,
Merry Mother be thy speed,

Saints to help thee at thy need;

Hark the knell is ringing:

Fear not snow-drift drivin' fast,

Sleet, or hail, or levin' blast;

Soon the shroud shall leg the fast,

And the sleep be on the cast;

That shall never know waking."

So it went on.

WITNESS Carmen was plotting in the midst of danger Izard entered the cabin, presenting such a ridiculous appearance that she could not help smiling. He had surrounded his neck with a triple row of corks, and his waist was similarly girt, in order to keep him afloat if the ship went to pieces.

There was little time for mirth, however, as he came to summon them on deck, where the sailors were trying to launch the boats.

The girls were ready, and under Izard's guidance they reached the deck in time to see the first boat dashed against the side of the vessel and split up into a thousand pieces.

A second attempt with another boat was more successful.

There was a momentary pause in the storm, and the captain, addressing Mercedes, said :

"You will be first, miss, if you please."

Mercedes saw that she must be brave, and, pressing Carmen's hand, descended the ladder and reached the boat in safety.

The sailors who manned her received her in their rough arms and placed her on a seat aft.

"Now, madam, it is your turn," said Captain Griffiths to Carmen.

She was about to follow when a gigantic wave dashed the boat away from the ship and carried her out to sea.

"They are all lost!" cried Izard.

"No, no!" exclaimed the captain, peering into the darkness. "I see a form in the boat; but one, and who it is I cannot distinguish."

A sudden flash of lightning illuminated the sky and enabled them to see that all the sailors had been swept into eternity, but Mercedes was plainly visible kneeling on one of the thwarts, her hands clasped, and her eyes supplicatingly directed towards the angry heavens.

The next moment the boat was swallowed up in the black night, and those who remained on board looked blankly at one another.

"She must perish," thought Carmen, who, terrified at the roaring of the wind and waves, descended once more to her cabin and threw herself on the bed.

The sailors demanded to be allowed to make a raft, and, gaining the captain's permission, they were soon at work with axe and cord, and in an hour's time had completed a raft which they successfully launched.

All embarked upon it, the first to go being Izard, and the last Captain Griffiths.

Their hope of safety was a transient one.

The heavy, unwieldy thing had not floated far from the wreck when a wave capsized it and all on board were plunged into the seething waves.

Izard was supported by his fantastic belts of cork, and, seizing a hen-coop which floated by him, kept himself up and struggled with the sea.

It seemed as if the tempest had exhausted itself by this last effort and disdained to work any more havoc, for the wind lulled, the waves lost their violence, a rent was torn in the clouds, and the silver moon shone out bright and clear, throwing a flood of argent light upon the vexed and foaming ocean.

For some little time Carmen remained below, then she grew frightened at the silence that reigned on deck.

Going up to ascertain the cause, a solemn spectacle met her gaze. The ship was deserted, and everywhere presented the spectacle of a complete wreck.

The devastation—the silence—the solitude, frightened her.

Raising her voice, she called for the captain, then Izard. There was no response, the ship was tenanted

by her alone. It was no longer a ship—it was a tomb.

"Cowards—cowards!" she exclaimed. "They have abandoned me and left me to die alone."

There was something horrible in this idea. Companionship at such a moment would have robbed death of half its terror.

Hot tears coursed one another down her pallid cheeks, and her courage deserted her.

The day broke splendidly and she could perceive land at a distance, yet the ill-fated "Marigold" was no longer driven towards it, but tossed ruthlessly like a log on the waves.

Dreadful forms floated around the ship; they were the corpses of the captain and the crew.

Pressing her hands to her head to hide the shock of sight, she prayed that she might not go mad.

Fortunately for her she was in the track of many ships, and before long a large iron steamer bore down upon the wreck.

She waved her handkerchief, the signal was seen, a boat put off to her help and she was rescued.

The captain of the steamer received her kindly, and after giving her such refreshment as she stood in need of asked whom she should say was saved from the wreck of the "Marigold."

"If we meet another ship going direct to port," he added, "I shall make a report for publication."

"To be sure," answered Carmen. "I will willingly give you the information you want. I—I am Mercedes Marshall Chabot, of Marseilles."

"Indeed. Then you are the daughter of the great shipowner and merchant," said the captain.

"The same, sir."

"And your destination is—"

"Bristol. I am going to visit my father's oldest friend, Mr. Frank Anglesey, of Bristol."

"Really, this is extraordinary," cried the captain. "Mr. Anglesey is my employer. Pray look on this ship as your own and all on board as your servants."

She smiled, saying she should remember his civility, and after listening to his remarks about the unfortunate loss of the "Marigold" went below to the state cabin, where she was waited upon as if she had been the highest personage in the land.

"Assuredly," she murmured, "my good fortune has not deserted me. I have the cards in my hands, and if I play my game well I shall yet have a bright and happy future."

With her usual audacity she had taken a grave step and plunged more deeply into the sea of imposition and deceit.

Mercedes was dead. Arthur Everton was dead. Of that she thought there could be no doubt. All the crew of the "Marigold" had perished, and the only person who could expose her imposition was Wilfred Marshall, who was too old to travel and too much immersed in business to venture upon a voyage to England.

Who then dared say that she was Carmen, the ballad singer? That secret perished with Izard. Who could say that she was the adventuress who entrapped Lord Kimbolton's son into marrying her? That secret died with Arthur Everton.

Besides, she only wanted a few months to enable her to espouse the adopted son of Frank Anglesey and the unfortunate Marigold.

"I will marry Ralph," she said, hugging closely to her heart the casket that Mercedes had given her. "Ralph shall think me that Mercedes whom it is his father's wish that he should marry, and it will be odd indeed if I do not make him kneel at my feet and kiss the hem of my dress in less than a week."

She played her new character well, and none on board the steamer took her for any one else than the lovely daughter of the rich Wilfred Marshall Chabot.

The following morning they steamed up the Severn, reached Bristol, and she prepared herself for the first interview with Frank Anglesey and his adopted son Ralph.

If impudence and boldness could win her the game, as she fondly imagined, she need not despair of success.

But in spite of her self-assurance the thought would intrude itself upon her that Arthur Everton might not be dead, and that it was possible for the sleuthhound Quincino to find her out.

"No matter," she said to herself; "they both love me, and when a man loves a woman she can do what she likes with him."

(To be continued.)

A MEMORIAL WINDOW.—In the Lady Chapel of Salisbury Cathedral has recently been fixed a window in memory of the late Bishop Burgess, bearing the annexed inscription:—"Ad gloriam dei et in honorarium memoriam Thome Burgess, quondam Episcopi de Sarum, qui obiit Feb. 19, 1837, poni caravagio propinquum est amici ad hunc superates, A.D. 1872." The window is the first of four designed to illustrate the leading events in the history of our

Lord, and to adorn the Lady Chapel of the cathedral. Bishop Burgess presided over the diocese of Salisbury from 1825 to 1837.

LORD DANE'S ERROR.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PERDITA looked the emergency straight in the face, just as she did all difficulties.

Could she stay there alone with the dead woman all night?

Many a stouter heart than hers might have shrunk from such an ordeal, surrounded as she was by mystery, not knowing but the murderer might come back at any moment to make his awful deed sure or to search for the child.

It was not easy persuading herself that she could stay, but it was quite dark by this time, and where could she go if she went away from here?

Besides, what could she do with the child? He might refuse to go from his mother, and to leave him there alone with her was not to be thought of.

She decided to remain where she was for the night, provided nothing new happened to alarm her or make such a stay seem unsafe.

The shutters she judged were close, and would not reveal to any one outside that there was a light within.

As much as she could she avoided looking at the dead woman, with her fixed and seemingly still threatening eyes.

She opened a door and looked into the next room. It seemed a sitting-room, and a small gilt chandelier hung from the centre of the ceiling.

A little search disclosed matches, and she lighted one of the lamps—not more, for fear of making light enough to attract some attention that would be better avoided. The room was a large one, larger than the one she had left, and furnished more handsomely.

Perdita sank down upon a velvet chair, glad of a little rest, and wondering what had become of the servants, who must have been in attendance here not long back. But she did not dare let her mind dwell on the subject with all its attendant and harrowing horrors, mysteries and terrors.

A sound in the next room made her heart fly into her throat. But it was only Georgie, whom for the moment she had quite forgotten.

Evidently the child had no suspicion that his mother was dead.

"Mamma asleep," he said, with his small finger on his lip, "mamma sleep so."

Perdita shivered at the child's wide-eyed imitation of that awful stare, but she held her hand to him invitingly.

He came to her knee at once and leaned upon it.

"Georgie hungry," the little fellow whispered; "come."

Perdita rose as he pulled her by the finger, and, taking the lighted lamp from the chandelier, let him lead her along.

A door at the right opened into a carpeted passage, and on the other side of that another opened into a dining-room with a painted floor. There was a handsome sideboard here with a bunch of keys hanging from one of the locks.

Opening this at the child's suggestion, Perdita found a jar of preserved meat, another of fruit, some bread that could not have been more than two days old, some biscuits, and the remains of a boiled ham. She found knives and plates in another compartment, and proceeded to lay out upon the table some from all of these stores.

The boy climbed upon a chair, and waited, watching her with satisfied looks.

When all was ready Perdita sat down beside him, helped him to sufficient, and ate some herself. She had forgotten her hunger for a little in the strangeness and horror she had just passed, but she found she had a keen appetite now, and both she and Georgie ate heartily.

Afterward she put everything back on the side-board, and went with him to the sitting-room again, where, after a look into the next room at "mamma," whom he pronounced to be still "asleep," he came and nestled contentedly into her arms, and fell into a rosy slumber, which soothed Perdita wonderfully to see after that other awful sleep in the next room.

The chair Perdita had taken was a very large and comfortable one—a deep, thickly cushioned easy-chair, with tall, sloping back and sides. She drew another chair forward for the child's feet, and eased his little curly head against the cushioned side. Then her own weary head drooped back, and, in spite of the strangeness and peril of her position, she fell into a heavy slumber. It will be remembered that she had travelled all the night previous.

She was awakened by the sound of voices seemingly right in her ear, and some one shaking her.

The same one shaking her proved to be the little boy.

Georgie was sitting up very straight, his black eyes wide and bright with terror, but not uttering a sound.

The voices which had seemed in the very room were somewhere outside in the yard or garden.

There is something frightful in being waked suddenly from sound sleep by danger, and that at the dead of night. In a strange house, under such circumstances as surrounded Perdita, it must have been doubly appalling.

The young girl felt for a moment as if she had lost her senses with terror, and the boy, putting his lips to her ear and breathing the horror-struck words "It's my papa," did not contribute to calm her.

However, as she became more fully awake she tried to recall her self-possession, and succeeded in a measure in doing so.

Georgie was frightened—very much so evidently; but either from a habit learned from his dead mother or by a strange instinct of terror, he made no outcry, but sat up with one arm round Perdita's neck, and was more composed outwardly than she.

Perdita listened with all her might.

The voices had ceased, but suddenly there sounded a loud knock on some door in another part of the house from that in which she and Georgie were, and the voices shouted immediately afterwards for admittance.

Perdita started up then.

She had recognized Clever Dick's voice. He had tracked her somehow.

Doubtless Mrs. Griff was with him, and perhaps the monster Grizale. Where should she hide from them?

How she wished now that she had explored the house before sleeping and found some secure hiding-place!

But it was too late now. Her eye fell on the door of the room in which the murdered woman lay. A thought flashed over her. Where could she be so safe as there? Would not those who were seeking her be afraid to enter that room?

Struggling with the dread that was on her of entering there and encountering again those terrible dead eyes, she softly crossed the sitting-room on the thick carpet, and entered.

Georgie went with her, and at a whispered word from her climbed to his scarlet nest in the midst of the bed canopy.

Perdita, without looking toward the rigid shape in the middle of the floor, crept in behind the curtains, and squeezed herself between the high bed and the wall, with the upper mattress nearly covering her, allowing but sufficient space to breathe.

Whoever they were trying to obtain admittance, they seemed to find considerable difficulty in accomplishing their object. But they at last succeeded in doing so by wrenching open a shutter and bursting in a window.

Perdita heard them ranging through the rooms next, and gradually approaching her own awful retreat.

In a moment more they were in the very room.

They had a light with them, and that, added to what was already there, threw an appalling distinctness upon that frightful sight upon the floor.

Perdita in her hiding grew cold in sympathy with their sensations at sight of it.

They had come noiselessly into the room—Clever Dick and Griff beyond a doubt—they knew them by their voices. They came to as sudden a stand-still as though they had both been strucken into stone.

For a moment silence reigned; the sight of the dead body had evidently transfixed the visitors with terror. Then Perdita heard them hustling each other and stumbling in their haste to get out of the room.

They had left the door open, however, and she could hear them conferring together.

"Dead woman or not," she heard Mrs. Griff say,

fiercely, "I am going to search the room through."

"Search if you like," said Clever Dick; "you won't get me in there though. One sight of that show's enough for me. I wish I know what killed her."

Griff gave an ugly chuckle.

"Well, you'll never know."

"Maybe I will."

"You won't."

"Maybe you know now?"

"Maybe I do, maybe I don't."

"Tell me, old woman."

"Tell you what?"

"Who killed her?"

"You'd better shut up. There was a young one. What can have become of it?"

"What's that, old woman—a baby?"

"Not a baby, but a small child—a handsome little fellow; I saw him once. Are you coming?"

Mrs. Griff seemed to approach the door of the next room again.

"Not an inch," answered Clever Dick, doggedly.

"Go and look, if you're so foolish as to want to. I'll stay here while you do it."

Mrs. Griff muttered something, and Perdita heard her the next moment making a hurried circuit of the room. She just tossed aside the curtain that shut in the bed and gave a look within, then the

young girl heard her dash out again to where she had left her obstinate companion.

"I've had enough of it," said Mrs. Griff, audibly. "Let's get out of the house. If the girl's here she'll be dead with fright before daylight. I don't believe she ever came near here. It was some other dogcart the boy saw, or he most likely made up the tale to get your money."

The pair dropped their voices, but continued to talk for some moments, discussing their future plans.

Perdita strained her ears in vain to hear what they said.

It was not long before they quitted the house.

Perdita now crept forth from her oppressive concealment, and spoke to Georgie in a low voice. The brave little fellow showed his curly head and pretty face at once, and Perdita took him in her arms and crouched down behind the thickly falling curtains of the bed.

Whatever her terror of that room might be, her fear of her enemies was more imminent, and they might be still watching for some sign of her to pounce upon her and take her back to all that she had so almost miraculously escaped from. Besides, she reasoned with herself, why should she fear where this innocent young child was not afraid? Georgie curled down beside her and Perdita hugged him close, kissing him softly too. It seemed to her that she had never loved any human being as she already did this child, of whose very existence she had been ignorant twelve hours before.

Georgie slept.

There was no more sleep for Perdita. She felt that that she had a task before her in evading her enemies, who proved by their pursuit of her into this out-of-the-way spot that they were using their utmost efforts to discover her. She lay planning what she should do next till little darts of light shooting through a crack here and there warned her that day had come.

It was still dark enough inside to make a lamp needless, but being daylight outside the lamp could not be noticed. She slipped off the bed and left Georgie sleeping. That terror which had assailed her so powerfully in the night-time was much decreased now. She looked first for some clothes for Georgie, who must go with her if it were possible to get him away from his dead mother.

She found several pretty suits in a press in that very room, and, selecting one for him to put on, she tied the rest in a bundle to take with them. Then, wakening the child, for she dared not linger longer, she washed and dressed him, and curled his pretty, soft hair, with her tears falling more than once at his unconscious forlornness.

(To be continued.)

WINIFRED'S DIAMONDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Charmed Cubes," "The Baronet's Secret," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. HUGHES, hearing of her daughter's determination, did not oppose it. She evidently looked upon the proposed journey as a girlish whim, of which Winifred would soon grow tired, and from which she would be very glad to return home when the fit of romance that dictated the step should have passed away.

The mere fact that the young clergyman encouraged it out, was a good sign in the mother's eyes, who knew nothing, by the way, of his relationship to the young officer who had addressed her so haughtily in the church on the morning of the interrupted bridal, and to whom she had since taken such a violent dislike.

All would be well in the end, she thought. Winifred would tire of her solitude—the young rector would visit his aunt, and so alleviate it, and the upshot of it all would be that they would come hand in hand to ask her blessing some fine day. Meanwhile, for that day she could wait.

So she bade her child farewell with very little emotion, and explained her absence to the neighbours by saying that she had gone on a visit to an elderly friend.

There was no one to contradict this assertion, since Mrs. Jones herself was ignorant of the girl's destination.

Miss March was a little puzzled, however, when she received her nephew's note, which Winifred delivered in person, and after reading it she gazed intently into the blushing face of its bearer for a few moments.

"Humph!" she said, at last. "And so David has sent you up here to be my companion, has he? If you have half the virtues he ascribes to you in this letter you will be the death of me in a week's time. I never could abide a perfect person yet."

Winifred smiled. She had been a little awestruck when, after arriving at the lonely old Grange that was

Miss March's home, an antique-looking servitor had conducted her to a large, gloomy drawing-room, and left her conversing with a small, sharp-eyed old lady in black silk, lace mittens, and old-fashioned head-dress of most preposterous shape and size.

But this free-and-easy address made her feel at home instantly, and she answered that she was not responsible for any errors of description into which the young clergyman might have fallen, and that she was very sure her perfection need give Miss March no uneasiness whatever.

"What possesses the boy to write in this wild-goose fashion?" said Miss March, helping herself to a great pinch of snuff. "Was he in love with himself?"

Certainly she was a terrible old lady for asking questions. To "beat about the bush" was a thing which Miss March had never been able to understand, or to do.

If she wished to know anything she went straight to the root of the matter, and made many other persons blush and falter in the course of her life, as poor Winifred found herself doing now.

"Humph—yes, I see," said the spinster, eying her carefully. "Well, why didn't you marry him? David isn't a Solomon exactly, or a Sampson either, for the matter of that—but he is a good, honest boy, and I should have thought that—"

"I beg your pardon, Miss March," said Winifred, quietly. "My personal affairs cannot possibly be of the slightest interest to you, and I should never think, for a moment, of intruding them upon your notice. Your nephew thought that I might possibly make myself of use here by reading aloud to you, helping you in domestic matters, and doing any other service of the kind you might wish."

"You understand the art of telling me to mind my own business in a very civil way—eh?" said Miss March, with a slight smile. "Well, never mind, my dear, you are quite right, and you shall tell me as much or as little about yourself as you choose when we grow to be a little better acquainted. I used to know your mother in my young days very well indeed, and I can afford to take Sarah Hughes's daughter into my house on trust, if any one can, that is sure. So, my child, just take off your bonnet and ring that bell, and we will have everything settled pleasantly. I am very glad you have come, for the days are growing chilly and the evenings are getting long and dull, and I should have certainly felt very lonely if you had not come here. Did you ring, my dear?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Then why on earth doesn't—Oh! there you are, Edkins."

A stout, elderly, comfortable-looking man-servant, in plain clothes, now entered the room.

"Edkins, what have you for dinner?" asked his mistress.

"Some soup, madam; if you please—some cod—and a leg of the small mutton that you—"

"Oh, I know all about it—thank you, Edkins. It was perfectly delicious, that which I ate the other day, and I'm very glad you have some of it now when my young friend has just come to us. Edkins, this is Miss Hughes—a young friend who has come to visit me—a friend of my nephew also, and from his place. You must do all you can for her while she is here."

Edkins bowed and answered solemnly that he would endeavour by every effort in his power to make the young lady's visit pleasant.

"Then consider yourself well looked after from this moment, my dear," said Miss March, rising from her chair. "Edkins is my right-hand man, my child, and if I am ill, or lazy, or anything else of the kind, you and he will have to steer the ship between you."

Winifred looked a little bewildered.

"I don't exactly mean that you are to take a boat's tiller in hand, of course, you little goose—only that you and he will be at the head of affairs together. Don't you see?"

Yes, Winifred saw.

"In fact, my dear—I may as well tell the truth first as last—you and Edkins will please take the reins in your hands from this moment—I have held them long enough. I am tired of governing now, and prefer being governed, if you will only rule me with a gentle hand. I am naturally—oh! so lazy—and never in my life have I had a chance to give way to the feeling so thoroughly and perfectly before as I mean to do now. You seem nice and clever and sharp and all the rest of it. I know Edkins to be the same, so you manage the house, the estate, and me between you; and as long as you give me a good dinner every day, and a good novel to read, you may do what you will, and I shall be satisfied, if you are. And now, Edkins—"

The butler threw the folding-doors of the drawing-room wide open on the instant.

"My lady is served."

Winifred started a little at the change from the dimly lighted drawing-room to a long and handsome saloon, glittering with wax candles and fire, and fragrant with the breath of countless bouquets of flowers.

The long table, covered with silver and with glass and china of the richest and rarest kind, looked fit for a prince's occupancy.

Yet there were only two women to sit at the sparkling board, one of whom was old and plain and dressed in antiquated fashion, while the other, though young and beautiful, yet wore only her travelling-dress of gray woolen, and held her bonnet in her hand.

Apparently this incongruity of things struck Miss March with a keen sense of the ridiculous, for, after a single glance around, she gave a little, hard, short, dry laugh.

"The table is far better dressed than we are, my dear. By the way, what is your name?"

"Winifred, or Gwendoline. I am generally called Winifred."

"I should think so, indeed. The other is simply barbarous. If you have no objection I will call you by that name while you are here."

"Certainly not."

"Very well then, Winifred. As our table so far outshines us both to-day, I propose that we turn a cold shoulder to it at once. Edkins."

"Yes, madam."

"Wheel out the little side-table for two." The quick-footed servant obeyed, and in almost less time than it has taken to describe the movements he had a snug little round table standing before the fire, still flashing with glass and silver, and of the most exquisite hue, yet looking "cozy" and comfortable to a degree.

Miss March sat down in her place at the head, motioned her companion to the foot, and glanced round with a gratified look.

The dinner was superb, and as soon as it was over Miss March and her guest went back into the drawing-room. It did not look dark or cold or dismal now. A bright fire crackled on the hearth. A table and two easy-chairs of crimson velvet were drawn up before the blaze.

"Do you sing or play?" asked Miss March.

"A little."

Miss March drew a velvet curtain aside from a niche just beyond her chair, and discovered a beautiful pianoforte at one end of the miniature apartment, while at the other stood a small organ and a magnificent harp.

Winifred took her seat at the piano without a word, and Miss March, who knew nothing of her romantic history, sat prepared to hear a bungling version of the "Battle of Prague," or some other school-girl performance, with which, to pay for her politeness, her musical ear was about to be tortured.

But, instead of the awkward crash and bungling attempt at harmony she had expected, there was a swift and brilliant thrilling of the keys under a skilful hand, and then the music glided, as of itself, into one of the most exquisite of all exquisite earthly things—the sweetest of those "Songs without words," each one of which is a poem and inspiration in itself.

Miss March sat listening with a look of profound astonishment on her face.

"Where did you learn to play like that?" she asked, at last. "Not one woman in a hundred is capable of it. Who taught you?"

Winifred could not well tell her without going into the particulars of her early life—a thing which she felt determined to avoid.

"I had a good master, and some natural talent," she said. "And I love music dearly, so I suppose I have got on better than any one would who did not care for it."

"Humph!" said Miss March.

The next post bore such a letter to her nephew that the Rev. Mr. Jones grew frightened and told the whole truth about Winifred in order that she might keep her place.

So Miss March knew, at last, that she who had occupied the exalted position of a beloved daughter of the Earl and Countess of Llangallen was beneath her roof, and that she had been engaged to her nephew, Hugh Rhys, but that the engagement was broken off, and might possibly never be renewed.

The old lady was romantic and soft-hearted, in spite of all her odd ways.

She made up her mind at once to set poor David entirely aside, and help Winifred to secure his rival, if she really wanted him.

CHAPTER X.

WINIFRED found much to admire and please her in the outward and inward aspects of the Grange, which was one of the finest old country seats in Wales.

It had been in the possession of the March family for many hundreds of years, and was full of family portraits, shut-up turrets, mysterious recesses and galleries, and all the other items which go to make an old house both interesting and famous.

But the strangest and most interesting thing of all was "Old Jeffrey's Store-room," of which Winifred had a full and true account before she had been many hours in the place.

Old Jeffrey had been butler to Mr. Ravenel March, the great-great-grandfather of Miss Eloise, and had met with an accident which had, as some said, affected his brain.

One thing was certain, that when his master returned at last from a lengthened tour and demanded an account of his stewardship, the old man met him with a frightened face—brought the keys of the strong-room where he had stored the treasures, and after a few incoherent attempts at explanation shot himself through the head and fell dead at his master's feet.

On examination his accounts were found to be garbled and unsatisfactory, much of the family plate was missing, and all the family jewels, including a diamond carcanet, a chain or collar of jewels of great value which had always been worn by each of the brides of the house of March upon her wedding-day and the day of her presentation to her sovereign.

From that time nothing had ever been heard or seen or known of the lost jewels, though some tradition was current among the retainers of the family that they were only to be found again by some favoured bride of the old house. Beyond this all was silence and mystery.

The strong-room was shut up, and Old Jeffrey was buried, while, in course of time, generation after generation of the Marches laid their proud heads down in the old churchyard beside him. But no bride among them all was lucky enough to find the diamond carcanet, though many a one of those fair and stately dames would almost have given the little ears off their heads to do so.

So this story among many others Winifred listened to during the first days of her stay at the Grange. It might have slipped her memory entirely had not Miss March recalled it to her one night just as she was lighting her candle to go to bed.

"See if you cannot dream of Old Jeffrey and the diamond necklace," that lady said, mysteriously.

And Winifred naturally asked:

"Why?"

"Oh, because a gallant cavalier is coming this way to-morrow, and you will like to look your best."

"Here—to this house?"

"Exactly."

"Is it any one I know?"

"It is, Lady Winifred."

The words, and the tone in which they were spoken, brought the blood rushing to the young girl's cheek.

"You know all then?" she said, in a low voice.

"I do."

"Who is coming here?"

"My nephew, Hugh Rhys."

Winifred nearly dropped her candle.

"Why is he coming? Does he know I am here?"

"Silly puss!" said Miss March, laughing. "Of course he does, and is very glad of the chance to renew his—what shall I call it?—acquaintance with you."

"You approve—knowing all—Miss March?"

"I do. To be sure I am a little sorry for poor David; but then we can't all have everything that we want in this world, and David must learn to console himself, as his elders and betters have done before him. As for you, Winifred, you are a lady by education, if you are not one by birth, and I should have scorned Hugh if he had given you up, even although you were so severe towards him. I'll give you a portion, my dear, as if you were my own child. So go to bed, and dream of Old Jeffrey and his diamonds, and all will yet go well with you."

She laughed as she spoke, and gave her a little playful push out of the room.

Winifred went away, feeling utterly bewildered.

Ten minutes before and she was a dependent—earning her bread from day to day, and with little of hope and less of love to make her life endurable.

Now, by the magic of a few kind words, all was changed.

He was coming. The star of her heart, the sun that lit her little world, was about to rise and shine upon her!

He was coming! He was true and fond as ever, though with her all had been so changed!

Her stern resolutions of the past were all forgotten. She only thought of the future now, and it was rose-coloured and bright with the glory of a happiness which was never to end except with her dying day. Scarce noticing, in her joyful abstraction, whether

her steps were leading her, she turned towards her room, as she thought, and, opening the door, had half crossed the apartment before she noticed that it was an unfamiliar one.

A long and narrow room, with stone floors and oaken shelves around the walls, and a great iron "strong-box" at the end; met her gaze.

What place could this be?

She had never happened to see it before, but a moment's reflection convinced her that it was the very room of which Miss March had been speaking—"Old Jeffrey's Store-room."

She had supposed it to be in some remote corner of the house, locked up perchance from every mortal eye and hand:

Yet there was not even a key in the door—and it was situated on the same landing with her own room, and very near to that apartment.

She did not feel any fear or even awe of the place, as she had expected.

She examined it somewhat curiously, it is true, but even in the midst of her search some happy thought of the morrow possessed her mind; and at last she set down her lamp on the lower shelf, and, sinking into a great arm-chair that stood beside the shutters' window, she leaned her head upon her hand and began to dream.

How long she sat there she never could tell. A loud ring at the door startled her at last.

She sprang up, hearing voices and greetings in the hall, blushed rosy-red.

Had he come already? Such impatience argued well for his truth and love.

She turned towards the door—wearily at last—to peep over the oaken banisters and see what manner of guest was being received below.

But before she had taken one step she stood still, as if rooted to the floor, while a faint cry of terror broke from her lips:

An old man—pale, haggard and wild-eyed—stood before her, his outstretched hand almost touching her arm. A long dressing-gown enveloped his lean figure, his gray hair waved down to his shoulders, and he leaned heavily, as if for support, upon a cane, while he regarded her wistfully, but without speaking.

"Who are you—what do you want?" she asked, at last, though it was a terrible effort to break the dreadful silence that reigned between them.

The figure bowed its head;

"Thrice have I spoken and none had courage to hear," it said, in a hollow voice. "Dare you listen?"

"Yes," she answered, with pale lips.

"The jewels, the plate, are thine. Restore them to their rightful owners and I shall rest at last in my grave."

"Where?"

He was pointing towards the iron strong-box. At her question he touched it with his staff.

"It is secured to the floor. Raise it, and in the hollow beneath you will find that which will prove my honesty. Will you do this?"

"I will."

"Swear it."

"Nay, there is no need. It shall at once be done."

"My poor wife deserted me just when I needed them most," he muttered. "But now Old Jeffrey may rest since his work is done and the treasure restored. Remember your promise."

The next moment all was silence.

No one stood near Winifred. Not a sigh or breath disturbed the quiet of the room.

For the first time since she had seen the apparition a deadly terror seized upon her. She tottered feebly downstairs and into the drawing-room—sank into the first chair she saw—and fainted away.

"Winifred, what ails you?"

"Darling—love—oh, Heaven—she is dying, Aunt Eloise—she is dying!" were the last sounds she heard before she sank into total unconsciousness.

When she recovered her senses once more she was lying in Hugh Rhys's arms, while Miss March and her maid bent over her with pale, terrified faces, administering all kinds of remedies, each one of which did but counteract the other.

She sat up with a faint smile, told her tale after she had welcomed her lover and learned by one glance into his kind and manly face that he was true.

There was little sleep at the Grange that night.

Hugh Rhys, aided by the butler, managed to lift the strong-box from its resting-place, and a flash of light sprang upward that nearly blinded them.

There, in a snugly contrived aperture in the floor, lay a heap of silver plate, and on it, dragged rudely from its half-open casket, the diamond carcanet, of whose lost splendours so many daughters of the house of March had dreamed.

Other gems were there, and handfuls of uncut rubies and emeralds, brought from the East by Raven March.

Miss March lifted her hands and eyes in mute wonder.

"Who would have believed it possible? It may have been but a dream; but in or out of one you have seen Old Jeffrey, Winifred, I am sure."

And Hugh Rhys gave her the diamond carcanet with a smile.

"It was to be found only by a bride of the house of March," he said, roguishly. "Keep it, love, and we will see, ere many days go by, if we cannot make the old tradition a true one."

It did not take many days or weeks to carry out the intention at which Hugh Rhys hinted.

Miss March approved, the Earl and Countess of Liangallen were delighted, and even Mrs. Hughes, hearing of the strange thing that had happened, observed that it would be flying in the face of Providence to hold out any longer, and gave her consent and blessing to the match.

But she did not grace the wedding by her presence, preferring to remain in her little cottage among the Welsh mountains, where, for ought we can say, she may at this moment be dwelling.

Neither did Mr. Jones present himself at the festivities.

Whatever pangs he felt were bravely endured—and must have been healed long ago, since the Rectory amid the mountains boasts a pretty brunnette-mistress; and a troop of rosy children, who call our friend David "father," sadly interfere at times with the composition of his sermons.

Lady Mary Apricot was bridegroom, and looked very sweet and interesting in her dress of pink-and-white tulles, with a long veil covering her from head to foot, and hiding all traces of the deformity which few who knew her now paused to notice.

The earl played the part of father, and gave the bride away, and the coquants cried over and blessed her, when all was over, as naturally as if she had been her mother indeed.

Lady Mary will never marry; but Winifred and Winifred's children are the greatest delights of Apricot House.

Winifred, having gained her heart's desire, is truly happy, and looks back upon the eventful period of her early life as a time in which she stored up golden lessons of wisdom, to be used when the sun of prosperity shone out once more upon her. Her home is at the Grange with Miss March doing the greater part of the year.

Hugh Rhys being in parliament, he and his wife and family are "in town" for the season, the rest of the time being divided between the two residences, Apricot Castle and the Grange.

"Old Jeffrey's Store-room" has been pulled down and converted into a light and pleasant parlour.

Winifred rarely sits there, however, nor does she like to wear the diamond carcanet even in its new and original form; and her servants all know that the first one who repeats the tale of its discovery to the children of the house will be at once and for ever discharged.

So, in all probability, dear reader, you are wiser than those young scions of Welsh aristocracy can ever be, since you have heard what to them is to be a sealed book, at least for years—the story of "Winifred's Diamonds."

THE END.

ROBERT RUSHTON'S DESTINY.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE storm which commenced so suddenly was one of great violence. It required all the captain's seamanship and the efforts of all the crew to withstand it.

However reluctant to do it, Captain Haley was forced to release Bates from his irons and order him to duty.

The latter worked energetically, and showed that he did not intend to shirk any part of his duties as seaman.

But the result of the storm was that the vessel was driven out of her course, and her rigging suffered considerable injury. The wind blew all night. Towards morning it abated, and, as the morning light broke, the look-out despatched a small island distant about a league.

The captain looked at it through his glass, and then examined the chart.

"I can't make out what island that is," he said. "It is not large enough," suggested the mate, "to find a place on the map."

"Perhaps it is as you say," said Captain Haley, thoughtfully. "I have a mind to go on shore and explore it. There may be some fresh fruits that will vary our diet."

This plan was carried out.

A boat was got ready, and the captain got in with four sailors to row.

Just as he was about to descend into the boat he turned to Robert, who was looking curiously to-wards land, and said:

"Rushton, would you like to go with us?"

It was precisely what Robert wanted. He had a boy's love of adventure, and the thought of exploring an island, perhaps hitherto unknown, struck his fancy, and he eagerly accepted the invitation.

"Jump in then," said Haley, striving to appear indifferent; but there was a gleam of exultation in his eye which took care to conceal from the unsuspecting boy.

Swiftly the boat sped through the waters, pulled by the strong arms of four stout sailors, and, reaching the island, was drawn into a little cove, which seemed made for it.

"Now for an exploring expedition," said the captain. "Boys," addressing the sailors, "remain near the boat. I will soon be back." Rushton," he said, turning to our hero, "go where you like, but be back in an hour."

"Yes, sir," answered Robert.

Had it been Captain Eldon instead of Captain Haley, he would have proposed to join him; but, knowing what he did of the latter, he preferred his own company.

The island was about five miles in circumference. Near the shore it was bare of vegetation, but farther inland there were numerous trees, some producing fruit.

After some weeks of the monotonous life on ship-board Robert enjoyed passing the solid earth once more. Besides, this was the first foreign shore his foot had ever trodden.

The thought that he was thousands of miles away from home, and that possibly the land upon which he now walked had never before been trodden by a civilised foot, filled him with a sense of excitement and exhilaration.

"What would mother say if she should see me now?" he thought. "What a wonderful chance it would be if my father had been wafted in his boat to this island, and I should come upon him unexpectedly!"

It was very improbable, but Robert thought enough of it to look about him carefully. But everywhere the island seemed to be without other inhabitants than the hints of strange plagues and notes which sang in the branches of the trees.

"I don't believe any one overlives here," thought Robert.

It struck him that he should like to live upon the island for a week, if he could be sure of being taken off at the end of that time.

The cool breezes from the ocean swept over the little island, and made it delightfully cool at morning and evening, though hot in the middle of the day.

Robert sauntered along till he came to a little valley. He descended the slope, and sat down in the shade of a broad-leaved tree. The grass beneath him made a soft couch, and he felt that he should enjoy lying there the rest of the day. But this time was limited. The captain had told him to be back in an hour, and he felt that it was time for him to be stirring.

"I shall not have time to go any farther," he reflected. "I must be getting back to the boat."

As this occurred to him he rose to his feet, and looking up he started a little at seeing the captain himself descending the slope.

"Well, Robert," said Captain Haley, "how do you like the island?"

"Very much indeed," said our hero. "It seems pleasant to be on land after being on ship-board so many weeks."

"Quite true. This is a beautiful place you have found."

"I was resting under this tree, listening to the birds, but I felt afraid I should not be back to the boat in time, and was just starting to return."

"I think we can overstay our time a little," said Haley. "They won't go back without me I reckon," he added, with a laugh.

Robert was nothing loth to stay, and resumed his place on the grass.

The captain threw himself on the grass beside him.

"I suppose you have read 'Robinson Crusoe'?" he said.

"Oh, yes, more than once."

"I wonder how it would seem to live on such an island as this?"

"I should like it very well," said Robert, "that is if I could go off at any time. I was just thinking of it when you came up."

"Were you?" asked the captain, showing his teeth in an unpleasant smile, which, however, Robert did not see. "You think you would like it?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am glad of that."

"Why?" asked Robert, turning round and looking in his companion's face.

"Because," said Haley, changing his tone, "I am going to give you a chance to try it."

Robert sprang to his feet in instant alarm, but too late.

Haley had grasped him by the shoulder, and in his grasp the boy's strength was nothing.

"What are you going to do?" asked Robert, with fearful foreboding.

"Wait a minute and you will see."

The captain had drawn a stout cord, brought for the purpose, from his pocket, and dragging Robert to a tree, tied him securely to the trunk. The terrible fate destined for him was presented vividly to the imagination of our hero; and, brave as he was, it almost unnerved him.

Finding his struggles useless, he resorted to expostulation.

"I am sure you cannot mean this, Captain Haley?" he said. "You won't leave me to perish miserably on this island?"

"Won't I?" returned the captain, with an evil light in his eyes. "Why won't I?"

"Surely you will not be so inhuman!"

"Look here, boy," said the captain, "you needn't try to come any of your high-down notions about humanity over me. I owe you a debt, and by Heaven I'm going to pay it! You didn't think much of humanity when you wounded me."

"I couldn't help it," said Robert. "I didn't want to hurt you. I only wished to protect your uncle."

"That's all very well, but when you interfered in a family quarrel you meddled with what did not concern you. Besides, you have been inciting my crew to mutiny."

"I have not done so," said Robert.

"I overheard you the other night giving some of your precious advice to my cabin-boy. Besides, you had the impudence to interfere with me in a matter of discipline."

"Frank Price deserved no punishment."

"That was for me to decide. When you dared to be impudent to me on my own deck I swore to be revenged, and the time has come sooner than I anticipated."

"Captain Haley," said Robert, "in all that I have done I have tried to do right. If I have done wrong it was because I erred in judgment. If you will let me go I will promise to say nothing of the attempt you are making to keep me here."

"You are very kind," sneered the captain, "but I mean to take care of that myself. You may make all the complaints you like after I have left you here."

"There is one who will hear me," said Robert. "I shall not be wholly without friends."

"Who do you mean?"

"The Almighty," said Robert, solemnly.

"Rubbish!" retorted Haley, contemptuously.

"I shall not despair while I have Him to appeal to."

"Just as you like," said the captain, shrugging his shoulders. "You are welcome to all the comfort you can find in your present situation."

By this time Robert was bound to the trunk of the tree by a cord which passed round his waist. In addition to this Haley tied his wrists together, fearing that otherwise he might be able to unfasten the knot. He now rose to his feet and looked down upon the young captive with an air of triumph.

"Have you any messages to send by me, Bush-ton?" he said, with a sneer.

"Are you quite determined to leave me here?" asked Robert, in anguish.

"Quite as."

"What will the sailors say when I do not return?"

"Don't trouble yourself about them. I will take care of that. If you have got anything to say, say it quick, for I must be going."

"Captain Haley," said Robert, his courage rising, and looking the captain firmly in the face, "I may die here and so gratify your enmity; but the time will come when you will repent what you are doing."

"I'll risk that," said Haley, coolly. "Good-bye."

He walked up the slope and disappeared from view, leaving Robert bound to the tree, a helpless prisoner.

CHAPTER XXV.

CAPTAIN HALEY kept on his way to the shore. The four sailors were all within hail, and on the captain's approach got the boat in readiness to return.

"Where's the boy?" asked Haley. "Hasn't he got back?"

"No, sir."

"That is strange. I told him to be back in an hour, and it is already past that time."

"Perhaps he hasn't a watch," suggested one of the sailors.

"I will wait ten minutes for him," said Haley, taking out his watch. "If he is not back in that time I must go without him."

The sailors did not reply, but looked anxiously inland, hoping to catch sight of Robert returning. But, bowed as he was, we can understand why they looked in vain.

"Shall I go and look for him?" asked one.

"No," said Haley, decidedly; "I cannot spare you."

The ten minutes were soon up.

"Into the boat with you," commanded the captain. "I shall wait no longer."

Slowly and reluctantly the sailors took their places, for Robert was a favourite with them.

"Now, men, give way," said Haley. "If the boy is lost it is his own fault."

They reached the vessel in due time. There was a murmur among the crew when it was found that Robert had been left behind, but, knowing the captain's disposition, no one except Bates dared to expostulate.

"Captain Haley," said he, approaching and touching his hat, "will you give me leave to go ashore for the young gentleman that was left?"

"No," said the captain. "He had fair warning to be back in time and chose to disregard it. My duty to the owners will not permit me to delay the ship on his account."

"He was a relation of the owner," suggested Bates.

"No, he was not. Go about your duty, and take care I have no more fault to find with you, or you'll go back into iron!"

Bates ventured upon no farther expostulation. He saw through the captain's subtlety, and felt persuaded that it had been his deliberate intention from the first to abandon Robert to his fate. He began to think busily, and finally resolved to go to the island and search for the boy. For this purpose a boat would be useful, since the distance, nearly a league, was too far to swim. Now, to appropriate one of the ship's boats when the captain was on deck would be impossible, but Haley, within five minutes, went below. Bates now proceeded to carry out his plan.

"What are you going to do?" demanded one of the sailors.

"I'm going after the boy."

"You'll be left along with him."

"I'll take the risk. He shan't say he didn't have one friend."

By the connivance of his fellow sailors Bates got safely off with the boat, and began to pull towards shore. He was already a mile distant from the vessel when Captain Haley came on deck.

"Who is that in the boat?" he demanded, abruptly.

"I don't know, sir."

He pointed his glass towards the boat, and though he could not fairly distinguish the stout sailor who was pulling the boat through the water, he suspected it was Bates.

"Where is Bates?" he asked.

No one had seen him.

"The idiot has gone to destruction," said Captain Haley. "I shall not go after him. He is well-come to live on the island if he chooses."

His reason for not pursuing the fugitive may be readily understood. He feared that Robert would be found bound to the tree, and the story the boy would tell would go heavily against him. He hurried preparations for the vessel's departure, and in a short time she was speeding away from the island with two less on board than when she first came to it.

I must now go back to Robert, whom we left bound to a tree.

After the captain left him he struggled hard to unloose the cords which bound him.

The love of life was strong within him, and the thought of dying under such circumstances was appalling.

He struggled manfully, but though he was strong for a boy the cord was strong also, and the captain knew how to tie a knot.

Robert ceased at last, tired with his efforts. A feeling of despair came over him, and the tears started unbidden to his eyes as he thought how his mother would watch and wait for him in vain—how lonely she would feel with husband and son both taken from her.

Could it be that he was to die, when life had only just commenced, thousands of miles away from home, in utter solitude? Had he come so far for this?

Then, again, he feared that his mother would suffer want and privation when the money which he had left behind was exhausted. In his pocket there were nearly forty pounds, not likely to be of any service to him. He wished that they were in his possession.

"If only he had left me free and unbound," thought Robert, "I might pick up a living on the island, and perhaps some day attract the attention of some vessel."

With this thought, and the hope it brought, he made renewed efforts to release himself, striving with his teeth to untie the cord which fastened his wrists.

He made some progress and felt encouraged, but it was hard work, and he was compelled to stop from time to time to rest.

It was in one of these intervals that he heard his name called. Feeling sure that there was no one on the island but himself, he thought he had been deceived. But the sound came nearer, and he distinctly heard

"Robert!"

"Here I am," he shouted, in return, his heart filled with sudden thanksgiving.

"Captain Haley only meant to frighten me," he thought. "He has sent some men back for me." In his gratitude he thanked Heaven fervently for so changing the heart of his enemy, and once more life looked bright.

"Robert!" he heard again.

"Hero!" he shouted, with all the strength of his lungs.

This time the sound reached Bates, who, having run up his boat on shore and secured it, was exploring the island in search of our hero. Looking around him, at length, from the edge of the valley, he despaired Robert.

"Is that you, lad?" he asked.

"Yes, Bates; come and untie me." Bates saw his situation with surprise and indignation.

"That's some of the captain's work," he at once decided. "He must be a scoundrel to leave that poor lad there to die."

He quickened his steps, and was soon by the side of our hero.

"Who tied you to the tree, lad?" he asked.

"Did Captain Haley send you for me?" asked Robert first, for he had made up his mind in that case not to expose him.

"No; I stole one of the ship's boats, and came for you without leave."

"The captain didn't know of your coming?"

"No; I naked his leave, and he wouldn't give it." "It was Captain Haley that tied me here," said Robert, his scruples removed.

"What did he do that for, lad?"

"It's a long story, Bates. It's because he hates me, and wishes me harm. Untie these cords and I'll tell you all about it."

"That I'll do in a jiffy, my lad. I'm an old sailor, and I can untie knots as well as tie them."

In five minutes Robert was free!

He stretched his limbs with a feeling of great relief, and then turned to Bates, whose hand he grasped.

"I owe my life to you, Bates," he said.

"Maybe not, lad. We're in a tight place yet."

"Has the ship gone?"

"Most likely. The captain won't send back for either of us in a hurry."

"You have made yourself a prisoner here for my sake?" asked Robert, moved by the noble conduct of the rough sailor.

"I couldn't abide to leave you alone. There's a more chance for two than for one."

"Heaven bless you, Bates! I won't soon forget what you have done for me. Do you think there is any chance for us?"

"Of course there is, lad. We've got a boat, and we can live here till some vessel comes within sight."

"Let us go down to the shore, and see if we can see anything of the ship."

The two bent their steps to the shore, and looked out to sea.

They could still see the ship, but she was already becoming a speck in the distant waters.

"They have left us," said Robert, turning to his companion.

"Ay, lad, the false-hearted villain has done his worst."

"I didn't think any man would be so inhuman."

"You're young, lad, and you don't know what a sight of villainy there is in the world. We've got to live here a while. Have you seen anything in the shape of food hereabouts?"

"There's fruit on some of the trees."

"That's something. Maybe we shall find some roots besides. We'll draw the boat farther up on shore and go on an exploring expedition."

The boat was drawn completely up and placed bottom upwards at a safe distance from the sea. Then Robert and his companion started to explore the island which had so unexpectedly become their home.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BUT for the knowledge that he was a prisoner Robert would have enjoyed his present situation. The island, though small, was covered with a luxuriant vegetation, and was swept by cooling breezes which tempered the ardour of the sun's rays. And of this island realm he and his companion were the undisputed sovereigns. There was no one to dispute their sway. All that it yielded was at their absolute disposal.

"I wonder what is the name of this island?" said Robert.

"Perhaps it has no name. Mayhap we are the first that ever visited it."



[HALEY'S REVENGE.]

"I have a great mind to declare myself the king," said our young hero, smiling, "unless you want the office."

"You shall be captain and I will be mate," said Bates, to whom the distinctions of sea life were more familiar than those of courts.

"How long do you think we shall have to stay here?" asked Robert, anxiously.

"There's no telling, lad. We'll have to stick up a pole on the seashore, and run up a flag when any vessel comes near."

"We have no flag."

"Have you a handkerchief?"

"One only," said Robert.

"That's one more than I have. We'll rig that up when it's wanted."

"Where shall we sleep?"

"That's what I've been thinking. We must build a house."

"A brown stone front?" said Robert. "The governor ought to live in a good house."

"So he shall," said Bates. "He shall have the first on the island."

"I wonder if it rains often."

"Not much at this season. In the winter a good deal of rain falls, but I hope we won't be here then."

"Where shall we build our house?"

"It would be pleasanter inland, but we must be near the shore, so as to be in sight of ships."

"That's true, Bates. That is the most important consideration."

They set to work at once and built a hut, something like an Indian's wigwam, about a hundred yards from the shore. It was composed, for the most part, of branches of trees, and enclosed an inner space of about fifteen feet in diameter. They gathered large quantities of leaves, which they spread upon the ground for beds.

"That's softer than our bunks aboard ship," said Bates.

"Yes," said Robert. "I wouldn't wish any better bed. It is easy to build and furnish a house of your own here."

"The next thing is dinner," said his companion.

"Shall we go to market?" asked Robert, with a smile.

"We'll find a market just outside."

"You mean the trees?"

"Yes, we'll find our dinner already cooked on them."

The fruit, of which they partook freely, was quite sweet and palateable. Still one kind of food cloyed after a time, and so our new settlers found it. Besides, it was not very substantial, and failed to keep up their wonted strength. This set them to looking for some other article which might impart variety

to their fare. At last they succeeded in finding an esculent root, which they partook of at first with some caution, fearing that it might be unwholesome. Finding, however, that eating it produced no unpleasant effects, they continued the use of it. Even this, however, failed to afford them as much variety as they wished.

"I feel as if I should like some fish for breakfast," said Robert one morning, on waking up.

"So should I, lad," returned Bates. "Why shouldn't we have some?"

"You mean that we shall go fishing?"

"Yes, we've got a boat, and I have some cord. We'll rig up fishing-lines, and go out on a fishing cruise."

Robert adopted the idea with alacrity. It promised variety and excitement.

"I wonder we hadn't thought of it before. I used to be a fisherman, Bates."

"Did you?"

"Yes, I supplied the market at home for a short time, till Captain Haley smashed my boat."

"The mean lubber. I wish we had him here."

"I don't. I prefer his room to his company."

"I'd try how he'd like being tied to a tree."

"I don't think you'd untie him again in a hurry."

"You may bet high on that, lad."

They rigged their fishing-lines—cutting poles from the trees—and armed them with hooks of which by good luck Bates happened to have a supply with him.

Then they launched the ship's boat, in which Bates had come to the island, and put out to sea.

Robert enjoyed the row in the early morning, and wondered they had not thought of taking out the boat before.

At last they came to the business which brought them out, and in about half an hour had succeeded in catching four fishes, weighing perhaps fifteen pounds altogether.

"That'll be enough for us, unless you are very hungry," said Robert. "Now suppose we land and cook them."

"Ay, ay, lad."

Of course their cooking arrangements were very primitive.

In the first place they were compelled to make a fire by the method in use among savages—that is, rubbing two sticks smartly together and catching the flame in a little prepared tinder.

The fish were baked over the fire thus kindled. Though the outside was smoked, the inside was sweet and palateable, and neither was disposed to be fastidious.

The preparation of the meal took considerable time, but they had abundance of that, and occupa-

tion prevented their brooding over their solitary situation.

"I wish I had 'Robinson Crusoe' here," said Robert; "we might get some hints from his adventures. I didn't imagine, when I used to read them, that I should ever be in a similar position."

"I've heard about him," said Bates; "but I never was much of a reader, and I never read his yarn. You might maybe tell me something of it."

"I will tell you all I can remember, but that isn't very much," said Robert.

He rehearsed to the attentive sailor such portions as he could call to mind of the wonderful story, which for centuries to come is destined to enchant the attention of adventurous boys.

"That's a pretty good yarn," said Bates, approvingly.

"Did he ever get off the island?"

"Yes, he got off, and became quite rich before he died."

"Maybe it'll be so with us, lad."

"I hope so. I don't know what I should do if I were alone as he was. It's selfish in me, Bates, to be glad that you are shut up here with me, but I cannot help it."

"You needn't try, lad. It would be mighty dull being alone here, especially if you were tied to a tree?"

"But suppose we should never get off?"

"We won't suppose that, lad. We are sure to get off some time."

This confident assurance always cheered up Robert, and for the time inspired him with equal confidence. But when day after day passed away and the promised ship did not come in sight, he used to ponder thoughtfully over his situation and the possibility that he might have to spend years at least on this lonely island.

What in the meantime would become of his mother? She might die, and if he ever returned it would be to realize the loss he had sustained.

The island, pleasant as it was, began to lose its charm. If his sailor companion entertained uneasy feelings he never manifested them, being unwilling to let the boy see that he was becoming discouraged.

At length, about six weeks after their arrival upon the island, they were returning from an excursion to the other side of the island when on arriving in sight of the shore an unexpected sight greeted their eyes.

A poll had been planted in the sand, and from it waved the familiar flag, dear to the heart of every Englishman—the union jack.

They no sooner caught sight of it than, in joyful excitement, they ran to the shore with all the speed they could muster.

(To be continued.)



[IN HIS POWER.]

EL GIVA;
or,
THE GIPSY'S CURSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Snapt Link," "Evelyn's Plot," "Sybil's Inheritance," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XIII.

Shame, shame to man
That he should trust so easily the tongue
That stabs another's fame
From bitterness of wounded vanity;
And well-schemed villainy
Should be condemned.

MARIAN OLIVER had returned to her own room after the nocturnal adventure that had so startlingly revealed the feelings and passionate will of more than one fair young creature on the very threshold of life.

The door was partly ajar as she approached it, and she paused for an instant to peep through the chink of an opening and gaze into the interior of her apartment.

There was a figure calmly reclining in the chair that she usually occupied—a figure that she knew full well, albeit the distance in rank and the brief interval that had elapsed since his arrival at the castle had precluded any previous interview between them.

For a brief moment the woman paused in doubt as to the intentions of the stranger in thus seeking an interview; but she was not one to shrink or be daunted by any unexpected emergency, and she opened the door and advanced to the table near which the stranger sat, with an unfaltering step that had no more indication of betraying alarm in its gait than if she had been accosting her nearest of kin.

"This is an unexpected honour, Prince of Mertz. May I ask the object of the visit?" she said, with the air rather of a superior granting an interview than an humble dependent surprised by the condescension of the noble guest. "It is a strange hour for your highness to be up, after the night's revels," she added, glancing at the clock, which pointed to the figure of four with its jewelled hand.

"There are secrets which accord with the gray, cloudy light," returned the nobleman, quietly, "and you are too experienced to need to be told that what I have to say will scarcely court the day's observation. Marian Oliver, you are no tyro in your part. It is many long years since you were sworn to secrecy and obedience—ay, even to the very death."

"To my own, to my own," she exclaimed, hurriedly, "not to that of others, prince. I never even dreamed of the catastrophe which you have brought

about when I obeyed my own will and the law of our fraternity by that long-past crime, and I will not, I cannot endure the stain of blood on my hands."

The prince gave a scornful laugh.

"Idiot! See what it is to have a woman in the case. There is ever some complaining, some milk-and-water weakness in the blood, even with the bravest of your sex. Marian, do you remember your oath? Do you not know that there will be blood shed to the last drop rather than that the sacred guild shall be violated? There is no escape—none. The only alternative will be that less considerate hands shall strike the blow, less moderate terms await the victims of the holy bond. Are you prepared for this? Am I to seek other instruments, and leave you to the punishment of your rashness?"

The woman shuddered visibly, and she sank down on the chair near him from sheer inability to stand rather than any wilful disregard of the respect due to her illustrious guest.

"Prince," she said, earnestly, "I have kept the secret for more than twenty long years; I have obeyed to the letter all that has been enjoined on me. But to what avail is this perversion of hearts and hands? Why is a young life to be sacrificed; and, yet more, to be rendered miserable for the caprice of a hard, cold law? Nay, I will speak," she said, as the prince raised his hand menacingly. "I may, perhaps, risk my own life, but I shall save widespread misery in so doing. Prince, answer me candidly. Do you love Lady Elgiva, heiress of the wide lands and ancient names of those noble lines—love her for her beauty and grace and high spirit rather than for her wealth and rank?"

The prince laughed.

"A cool question, it must be confessed, from a dependent to a prince with royal blood in his veins. Pray do you really think I shall satisfy your curiosity, Mrs. Marian Oliver? It is really too excellent a jest to be worth indignation, or—

"Or you would crush me under your foot, is it not so, noble prince?" returned the woman, coolly, for she seemed to have regained her composure during his taunting speech. "Well, I quite understand that it does seem extremely insolent in so humble an individual to pry into the secrets of such an exalted personage; only I have heard it said that knowledge is power, noble prince, and I happen to hold the key to secrets which would influence your and others' fates for long, long years. It matters little to me,"

she added, calmly, "whether you or your rival carry off the prize—little whether you gather ashes in your mouth instead of the sweet fruit you desire to pluck; only it might influence my actions and guidance of the power of which I hold the secret."

"You dare to talk thus—you dare to break your vow?" said the prince, sternly. "Woman, either you are in your dotage and cannot comprehend the peril you incur, or you count too much on my own idiotic belief in your ravings. You ceased to be your own mistress from the time that you took that solemn, binding oath."

"Ceased to be master of my actions, but not of my secrets and my knowledge," she returned, calmly. "Harkye, prince, were I to blindly obey your lead and carry out your orders I should bring certain misery and failure on your head. It rests with yourself whether you will avert it by trusting me, or whether you will leave me to work my own schemes in ignorance of your real interests and desires, which I suppose you came at this strange hour to explain."

The prince was silent for a few minutes, and when he spoke it was in a different strain.

"Marian, who was that strange vision that flashed like light in the ball-room but now? She had a look that recalled a face I once knew in other and early days. Yet she came and went like a Peri rather than a creature of mortal mould."

"Pray did you ask the count or Lady Elgiva the question?" returned the woman, calmly.

"No, I did not choose to betray any interest in the girl; nor indeed do I feel anything but curiosity in the matter," he said, carelessly.

"Then you may indulge it at your leisure, prince," she said, coolly. "There are matters of far more moment to be discussed, if you take it in that mood. I thought you had a deeper motive than mere casual surprise at a rather foreign-looking girl who could execute a Spanish dance with grace."

"Then you do know her? You introduced her there? You have some especial reason for bringing her under my notice?" he said, quickly. "Marian, do you suppose I should dream of that mysterious unknown when a high-born heiress is in the way? No, if I were to relinquish my pursuit of the fair Elgiva, it should certainly be for one who could catch my heart as but one woman has ever done; and since that is impossible I shall adhere to my first object, Marian—a marriage with the young lady of Arneheim and Chetwode."

"I am answered," said the woman, with a covert smile. "Do you give me your word, prince, that you will hold me utterly free from blame if I do my utmost to arrange your marriage with the young heiress, and shield me from any of the penalties of disobedience to your commands?"

"Undoubtedly, Marian," he returned, quickly; "but then you must understand what you are undertaking. In the first place the girl is in love, like a romantic simpleton, with that vagabond gipsy whom you are nursing back to life, or, rather, whom

that little witch Lena is charming from death's very grasp by her wiles. You know that, I suppose, among your other vaunted secrets, Marian Oliver?"

The woman bowed her head.

"Then he, I suppose, is mad enough to lift his eyes to her," continued the prince, bitterly. "The fellow might be content, I think, with a pretty little gipsy like his nurse. Upon my word, Marian, I'd give a quarter of the inheritance if she could be transformed into the heiress. There is a strange fascination about the girl, yet she's as proud and cold as if she were an iceberg."

"You had better leave Lena Farina to her own station and her own fate, prince," said Marian, angrily. "She at least is out of the pale of your horoscope. But for the rest, leave it to me. I will pledge my word that Juan De Castro shall never wed the lady heiress—never; and, however wildly she may love him, she shall relinquish any hope of his hand, or suffer the penalty. Will that satisfy you?"

"Perhaps, with the addition of a promise to forward in all respects her meetings with myself," he returned, doubtfully. "I have little faith in that poor, weak idiot, her father. He has not courage to tell her the only secret which would force her to consent, and I abhor the very thought; you see, in its revelation. The girl would prevaricate; I would wager," he continued, laughing bitterly, "ruin her own hopes and mine, rather than yield her proud spirit; nor does it suit me to force an unwilling bride to the altar. Marian, it is my will that you forward my wishes by every effort in your power, and if you fail I shall not relent from the punishment you deserve from such negligence."

She drew herself up with a cold haughtiness, that might have graced a princess on her throne as she replied:

"You little know what you demand. Little guess the consequences of your blind recklessness, Prince Charles of Meriz. Let them come on your own head; I am innocent whatever betides. The terms of my bond shall be fulfilled to the letter. I will do all in human power to prevent the heiress from marrying her gipsy lover and give her to you whether from love or from fear. Will that suffice?"

There was a sarcasm in the woman's tone that baffled the German noble's comprehension.

"Marian, you forget the bond, the solemn oath, the terrible penalty, or you would not dare speak so tightly and so insolently," he said, sternly.

"I do not, I do not," she exclaimed, proudly. "I have sinned and suffered for the sake of one I loved as myself, and for that cause I took the fearful oath which binds me to such dreadful slavery; but at least it shall be for some fruit that I labour and endure. Prince, if you could comprehend all that burns in this seared heart, if you did but read my soul, you would know that Maria Oliver is more bound by revenge than fear—that she would shed her heart's blood to avenge the wrongs and misery out the will of those who have been long since numbered with the dead. Be content. Your desires happen to coincide with mine, and that is your best security for my obedience. You shall wed the heiress, and Juan shall be content with his gipsy bride. Is that what you desire at my hands?"

"And Lena—what of her? Can you endure that the very flower of her tribe shall be cast back in loneliness and obscurity?" asked the prince, half-doubtingly. "Marian, if you are really as true to your kindred as I am ready to believe you should not reject my offer on her behalf. She shall be cared for in my household, placed in luxury and ease, trained in the accomplishments that are the grace of her sex. Let it be so. You can work this result if you will, and your reward shall not be wanting in after years."

Marian smiled with a peculiar meaning as she replied:

"You are right, prince. Lena shall be placed in the sphere to which she belongs. Be at rest on her account. Leave all to me, and ere many weeks or perhaps days are passed you shall see the fulfilling of my promise. Now it will be necessary for you to leave me, prince," she added, "for, though my age will fully protect my reputation, there might be strange rumours were you to be seen leaving my apartments at such an hour. Ere long the servants may be astir, or even the fair heiress of the domain leave her room in her restless anxiety for the invalid. Ah, prince," she said, with a scornful smile, "you little know the female heart when you committed such an outrage. It is difficult even now to remedy the consequences of your folly, but I must move cautiously and secretly till the lost ground is regained."

"Sometimes I feel inclined to throw up the whole game," said the prince, impatiently. "only it is too rich a prize to relinquish, and I am well nigh ruined by the mad lavishness of my forefathers and the draining claims of my position. Funds have failed of late, since heavy business has been undertaken by the Vein-Gericht, and I am bound to make good the deficiencies or give up my presidency, you see,

Marian. Even you have made large demands of late on the exchequer," he said, carelessly.

"Yes, and shall probably need more," she said, coolly. "I have a part to play in which many purposes have to be worked, and money is indispensable for the necessary arrangements. But of that more hereafter. Go now, prince, and make no more rash attempt to see me till I give you the signal. All depends on complete absence of suspicion where I am concerned, and as yet I have been alone and unfettered in the household, with absolute authority to go and come and rule it at pleasure. No mean post for the unknown Zingara, is it, prince?" she added, with a triumphant laugh.

"When the Zingara has the secret strength of the Vein Gericht at her command there is little she cannot command," said the prince. "Marian, let us cement our new bonds with the usual pledge."

And he held out his hand and grasped hers with a mystic pressure that made even her dark face pale under its force.

"It was needless, prince," she said, as he removed his fingers; "but it is satisfied you it is well. I am no such slave of symbols and forms. Now fare well."

The prince passed out of the room with a doubtless mien and slow step.

Had his thoughts been interpreted they would have disclosed distrust and mortification at the interview in which he had played a somewhat subordinate part.

CHAPTER XLIV.

There's nothing in this world worth enjoy-

Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale;

Voxing the dull ear of a drawzy man.

The sound of Prince Charles's steps had suddenly died away from the silent vestibule in which Maria Oliver's apartments were situated than she turned the key in the lock of their outer door, and, after cautiously examining every corner of the apartment where they had been conversing, she removed a tall screen, which seemed strangely light and portable for its massive size, and, pressing her hand firmly on a panel behind its usual resting-place, it shortly obeyed the touch and slid noiselessly and gradually within the groove in which it was gently and almost imperceptibly fitted.

Marian passed through the aperture, which was just large enough to admit a full-grown person within its width, and then, nearly closing it, she went on through a small ante-chamber to a corresponding panel, to which she applied the same magic touch and soon stood within a chamber that had apparently been little—if at all—used for many long years.

The hangings were of Gobelin tapestry, which were fast becoming faded, in their bright colours, and the large bedstead and sofa and chairs that formed the furniture of the room were covered by the same costly material.

The room appeared empty at the first glance, but there was a half-opened door communicating with a smaller apartment that evidently formed a dressing-room to the bed-chamber, and on the woman had stood for many seconds within the chamber a female form appeared from that inner apartment, and stood within the doorway with an eager, wild excitement in her dark large eyes that spoke more forcibly than words the fever of her mind.

She was indeed a singular-looking being, one who would have brought a chill sense of terror to any ordinary frame by her very aspect, though there were traces of marvellous beauty in her features, such as seldom survives the ravages of time. Her figure was tall, and the skeleton-like spareness of her whole frame and hollowness of her pale cheeks destroyed the charm that once must have belonged to both.

But the grace of the falling shoulders, the small feet and beautifully shaped hands were still evidence of past symmetry.

And the features, however disfigured by the unnatural wasting of the cheeks, were exquisitely chiselled in mould, and when closely examined by the spectator might even yet seem capable of being renovated to former loveliness.

Her eyes were even painfully large in contrast with the small, wasted face, but the long lashes still fringed the lids with softening effect save when they deepened each coal-black iris with their thick shadow as they dilated in too common fits of wild grief for the past or anxiety and suffering in the present.

She stood there, supporting her wasted form by the handle of the look on which she leaned, and fanning Marian with a frenzied eagerness to learn her errand that only the long-tried and the lonely could betray.

Her lips parted, but no sound came from them, as if the parched tongue could not move from the roof of the mouth, and the question she desired to ask was only to be read in the dilated and beseeching eyes.

"Foolish Tessa," said Marian, firmly taking the poor, wasted hand and leading her to a seat on the

large couch. "What means all this wild excitement, as if there could be anything for the present to hope or to fear?"

The prisoner—for such indeed she might be called, whose range of liberty was confined to those two secret chambers—gave a wan smile, though she did not speak for a few minutes.

"No, no—nothing to fear," she murmured. "Oh, Marian, how can I live if I do not hope? You promised me—yes, yes—long years since, Marian," she whispered. "Must I die and yet not see her, hear her say that sweet word that never yet came on my ears?"

The woman who sat by her, half supporting the shaking form with her own powerful arm, gazed at the working features with a half-pitying, half-angry expression in her face.

"Tessa!" she said, "this is miserable weakness and ingratitude. Have I not devoted myself for long, weary years to the one task that love and pride assigned me? Love for you such as woman rarely feels for woman, and for him, ay, bitter, deep indignation that can never be appeased till the punishment is worked out and the injuries redressed. It is a tangled web that I have had to weave." she went on, "and one false step might destroy all the long and anxious workings. But it is well nigh at the end now. A few more months, and a little exercise of faith and patience, and all will be at an end, and you once again restored to liberty and happiness."

"Happiness!" said the poor captive, timidly. "Oh, Marian, that can never be. Look at me; I am well nigh worn to the last stage of weakness and grief. And listen, Marian; my brain wanders at times. I scarcely know whence I am, and even when your step comes in bring me the sole comfort and joy I can know. I tremble lest some one should be at hand who has discovered the secret and would drag me from my hiding-place. Oh, it is a fearful mystery that surrounds us. I shudder when I think of the hidden power that can neither be detected nor feared like ordinary dangers."

Ewan Mariz's eyes were cast down lest they should betray the emotion which the words, following the ominous interview she had just concluded, could not but conjure up even in her brave spirit.

But her tones did not falter as she replied to the poor, trembling suppliant for comfort and hope.

"It is too late to indulge such weakness, Tessa. We have chosen our part and must abide the possible penalty. And surely I have far more to dread than you can ever suffer. I, who have rescued you, sheltered you from discovery for so many anxious, weary years, who have been well nigh as complete a captive as yourself, since I dare not commit our secret to any human being—surely you should not murmur when I have dared such suffering for your sake, when I even now plot and plan and guide hearts' passions with an unsparring, stern hand, that may bring revenge and ruin on my own head. Come, Tessa, let us have no more of such folly," she added, more sternly. "See, I have brought you restoratives that should revive your weak spirit. Drink this when you have eaten the tempting morsels I have managed to save for you from the last night's revels. You heard it, perhaps, Tessa. That loud, joyous strain, the roll of carriages, the sound of voices and feet, the clang of music—all would reach even this secret, silent chamber."

"Yes, yes; and she," said the poor invalid, eagerly, "did she shine—did she take her place amidst the gay throng?"

Marian looked perplexed for a few moments.

"I scarcely know to whom you allude, Tessa. If you mean Elvira, the heiress of the proud domain, she was the courted and admired of all observers. If the flashing gipsy girl, the brilliant Amico, she secured only the poor moth who sings their wings at the flame. "Or," she added, in a lower tone, "if you refer to the humble, lone orphan, Lena Farina, her place was in the side chamber, her thoughts with the suffering, her heart's pure tenderness lavished on him whom she considers as a brother. Which is the noblest and the dearest to your heart, Tessa?" she asked, musingly.

"Marian, you are cruel—hard. You know but too well my heart's yearnings, and that they have been frozen, tortured in their sympathies. What is to be the end? What can I do to break this dreadful thralldom, this deception that so weighs on my soul? Marian, it is unnatural for a woman to desert her offspring, to leave her to battle with the cruel world, ay, and under a false name, in a false station, with false hopes and fears and love, Marian."

"There are more than one under those unnatural falsehoods, Tessa," returned Marian, gravely. "It is a web of illusions which surround us. Hearts are given under such delusions, and happiness staked—ay, and honour and safety too. Tell me, Tessa, from your very heart, if you must choose between them would you desire the glory and distinction to be secured for his child or your own?"

The prisoner bowed her head in doubtful abasement, then, in a low voice, that trembled with the strength of her emotion, whispered:

"Marian, I loved him, worshipped him as few could. Let it be as he would have desired were he living in this weary world. I was but a lowly flower when he plucked me from my stem, not worthy to be grafted on his stately stock. I could bear all; I have endured all, even now for his sake and for him. I would let my child give place to his. Marian, let it be so. Only when it is all finished, when justice is done, when all danger is past, she must close my eyes and receive my last blessing. You will grant me that consolation, Marian, will you not?"

There was something in her words that seemed to irritate her visitor.

"Hush, idiot," she said; "true woman in your slavery to tyrant selfishness, in your calm devotion of your offspring to the same ruthless Moloch. Tessa, there should be none fiery blood in your veins when our Southern current kindles the flames, more pride, more love for your child, than such blind sacrifice of her rights. But let it be; she is good, and noble and true, and there may be a higher destiny for her than the stained name which should be her own. Now, Tessa, farewell. It is time that you and I should seek some rest after the night's wild excitement. Have you read the books I brought you?" she said, gazing round.

"If No. There is but one book, and that is my own troubled life," was the reply. "Only one image in my heart, and that is this treasure."

And she pressed a miniature locket to her heart with an inexpressible look of tenderness that for the moment gilded her features with their former beauty.

Marian lifted her hands in hopeless wonder.

"Woman, woman, thou dost deserve all that man can do for thy abasement and injury," she said, bitterly. "Ay, and were it not for my oath, and for the love that still warms my heart, I would leave this poor simpleton to lie down to die in her utter degradation of thought and mind. But no, that must not be," she continued, looking with pity on the poor, shadowy creature whose fate had been so dreary and lonely for such a long series of years. She is mine, all that is left to me to love and cherish; and she loves me too, do you not, my poor Tessa?" she added, clasping the slight creature in her arms.

"Yes, yes. Do not forsake me not her. I am foolish and wayward, Marian, and my head does not seem right at times, but I can always love you as my sole support, my only friend in my terrible fate."

The two women were clasped in a silent embrace that spoke more forcibly than words the bond of clinging dependence and protesting love that united them in their strange communion of life.

CHAPTER XV.

Hence all the fluttering vanities that lay

Nettles roses in the way!

Hence the desire of all that is not fate!

Hence love himself, that tyrant of my days.

Which intercepts my coming praise!

MARIAN OLIVER rose early in spite of her brief slumbers on that memorable night.

There was too feverish an exertion in her mind, too busy an activity in her spirit for rest, and she hastily dressed herself after her short repose, and repaired to an apartment sufficiently near her own to prevent any prying observations from the household on her way thither.

She turned the handle softly in the lock, and gently passed into the bed chamber, where the inmate was still wrapt in the slumber; that is rarely denied to youth and health, even in secret grief. Marian walked to the bedside, and looked on the sleeper with earnest, and examination of every lineament in that fair young face.

It was one that contrasted strangely with the snowy pillow on which it lay.

The warm complexion, the jetty hair and ruddy lips were thrown out in full relief, and Marian felt that they could be scarcely so strikingly beautiful even in their utmost splendour of toilet as in that simple, unadorned repose, with the long lashes on the round cheek and the small hand resting under its soft, peach-like bloom.

She half smiled as she gazed on the picture.

"It is not often," she said, "not often that such a downy couch has awaited repose for this forest child. But she must be roused now, at any cost." She stooped down and touched her face with her lips. "Amice, Amice," she cried, softly. "Awake, my child. This is no place for you after the household is astir, but I would speak to you ere you depart, my child, for much depends on your truth and candour at this moment, ay, for others as well as yourself."

The girl had fully regained her senses now, and sat up on her pillow, gazing at the tall visitor with half-surprised, half-resentful astonishment.

"I know not what you want with me," she said, haughtily. "I have those who can take better control of me and my fate than you seem likely to do. The servant of that proud, hateful girl can be no

friend to me. But I am ready to go," she said, bitterly. "It was for him that I wished to come, and consented to play the part I did last night."

She sprang from the couch and began to resume the simple but romantic attire that was her ordinary costume in her native tents.

Marian laid her hand quietly on the light form with a restraining though not violent grasp.

"Foolish, headstrong girl!" she said, calmly. "You little comprehend who or what I am, or the influence I can exert over your fate. Did I not accomplish the one wild wish of your heart, and give you entrance into this castle, without which you would have been raised as a vagrant and that? Did I not enable you to see him you profess to love, and, yet more, make the daring attempt to test your beauty and grace among such an unknown crowd? Do you suppose I had no object in all this, or that it was a wild freak of a woman long past such fancies or risks?"

Amice listened with a sort of sullen fascination.

"I do not know. I cannot tell anything about it," she said, at last. "But if you did it was from my own dazing that it succeeded," she went on, with a sudden kindling of her features. "Yes, it was glorious to see those proud lords and ladies in jealous envy of the stranger, and that marquis, with all his impertinence, forced to court humbly the unanticipated gipsy girl. You are right there," she continued, with a slight laugh. "I tasted some triumph then."

"Only it faded by his bedecking," put in the woman, sarcastically. "Yes, when he turned in his unconsciousness to the young heiress for whom he now suffers. That was no triumph then, was it, Amice, my proud child?"

The girl's eyes flashed dangerously.

"How dare you taunt me?" she said. "Woman, you do not know what I might do if you drive me to fury. I could have killed her as she stood there with her crocodile tears and her hypocrite smile as he looked up at her in his delusion. I hate you to tell you, and Jean shall never dare to prefer her to me—ever!"

She stamped her foot furiously as she spoke, and her passion was lashed up to fury by Marian's quiet smile.

"You are but like the rest of the foolish lowvienek girls who think the whole of life depends on passing it with the first face in their view that they happen to fancy," she said, scornfully—"at least, you speak like one, and I shall soon test your truth when you comprehend the main question before you. Listen quietly, Amice," she said, "for much more than a girl's idle, trifling jealousy hangs on the answer you will give, the decision you form now. You say that you hate and envy Elgiva of Arnhem for the love that Juan De Castro bears her in treacherous preference to you—his cousin. Is it not so?"

"Yes, from my very soul," muttered Amice, from between her closed teeth.

"Granted," resumed Marian, "but is there nothing else that you would like to take from her; or share with her? You saw last night the splendour that surrounds her; you tested some of the homage which is at her feet. Yet it was as nothing to what she really possesses. Would you change it for Juan's love were you in her place? Would you give it all up, and go into the obscure poverty and humble life that you lead in the gipsy tents and the company they give you? You have learnt much that others of your tribe never dream of in their barbarous ignorance, but the Lady Elgiva has gifts and accomplishments far beyond yours that she would have to forget."

"It is false!—it is false!" exclaimed the girl, angrily. "I can speak the languages of Italy and Germany as my own native tongue, because I have lived from childhood in those lands. I dance as those poor, tutored creatures could not have attempted had they writhed themselves like snakes in the effort. What do you want more? What can she do more?"

"Many things," returned Marian, calmly. "You cannot write, you cannot tell where this fair world lies on the traced lines which are familiar to her, you cannot touch the harp, or sing like the birds in yon woods. Amice, she has far more to sacrifice than you could have. Yet, I ask you, had you the choice, had you her rank and wealth and homage and luxury, even as you now see, now feel them, and yet give all up for Juan?"

"It is a taunting, mocking question, I will not answer you," said the girl, snatching away her hand.

"It is one on which your whole future fate may depend," returned Marian, calmly. "I ask you for truth, and on that truth you may have to act. Amice De Castro, ask your own proud heart, your passionate nature, ere you decide."

The girl's eyes were fixed on Marian's as if they would pierce her inner meaning.

But there was no faltering, no evasion, no sneering smile on her features, and it was impossible

to doubt her resoluteness of purpose, whatever might be the wildness of the ideas suggested.

"I know not, perhaps could not, yet if I had all to give, as she has, I might try to raise him to myself," returned the girl, after a moment's pause. "Juan is as handsome and gentle and graceful as any of those grand cavaliers who crowded after me last night. Why should he not be one of them?"

"There is no question of that, Amice," said Marian, sharply. "The choice is put to you: Either Juan De Castro—if you can win him back from his wild love—or rank, wealth, luxury, to your utmost desire. Think well, and then tell me your decision ere it is too late."

She turned from the girl as she spoke, but her keen eyes did not lose one movement of the limbs, one change in the features, during the pause that followed.

More than once they rested on the fiery mark of a tiny dagger, as it almost might be traced on the white shoulders of the girl, below the arm pit and out of any possible observation when her dress was arranged on her slight figure.

At length the girl spoke, but in hesitating accents.

"It is so foolish," she exclaimed, impetuously. "It is absurd even to dream of such things for me, in this miserable gab," and she pointed to the simple garments she wore, "and with a gipsy chief for my father. It is but insult to probe my pride and ambition thus."

"It is not," solemnly returned Marian. "I pledge you my solemn word, child, that if you can say from your heart that you would prefer such a grandeur as you saw last night, and such a suitor for your hand as the coroneted marquis, with his humble homage, to Juan and your gipsy tent, then all shall be yours, all that your heart can wish—ay, and beyond your wildest imaginings."

Amice flushed eagerly.

Her eyes glanced round at the comparative elegance and richness even of that modest chamber; then on the glittering garb she had worn on the previous night, and her ears could still recall the honeyed accents of Lord Easton's flattery.

Then she recalled the humble pauper, the rude cushions, the rough faces, the wandering misery of her native home.

"If I could believe you, if it were possible——" she said, hesitating.

"I will swear it if you will," returned Marian, eagerly. "I will swear it ere many weeks are past you shall be in such a home as will train you for your destiny, that you shall shine, as Lady Elgiva herself, in the gay throng of which you caught a flash last night, and in due time you shall have the full accomplishment of your desire. Will that suffice?"

"But my father—what of him? He would pine if I left him," said the girl, with a gleam of affection. "He loves me and is never severe, as he is with Juan or even Lena, and he gives me all he can. Woman, whatever may be your power to accomplish such wild witchcraft, can you comfort him and make him content to losing his child?"

Marian half shuddered, though there was little in the words apparently to occasion such emotion.

"It is a sore thing perhaps for a parent," she said, "but I can accomplish the task of preparing him for the sacrifice if you are firm in your resolve. It is too late to repent when once the plans are formed, the arrangements begun. Amice, time presses; you must leave the castle ere the guests have descended after their tardy repose. Amice, your fate hangs on your next words. I am not one to be trifled with. What is your choice—rank, wealth, and pride, or Juan and love and poverty?"

Amice gave one glance round. Then her eyes fell on the humble attire she had just donned, and it recalled the whole *entourage* of the gipsy life and its comfortless, obscure isolation from the world and its luxuries.

It was enough.

"I cannot endure that miserable degradation," she said, impatiently. "If you can perform your promises I will play my part as well as the vaunted heiress who has stolen Juan's foolish love. But if you deceive me in your promise I will die rather than yield up the sole possession left me in my detested lot."

(To be continued.)

JOHN WESLEY AND THE CHURCH.—The following extract from a letter by the Rev. John Wesley will prove interesting to some readers:—*"October 10, 1778.* The original Methodists were all of the Church of England, and the more awakened they were the more religious they adhered to it in every point, both of doctrine and discipline. Hence we inserted in the very first rules of our society, 'They that leave the Church leave us.' And this we did, not as a point of prudence, but as a point of conscience. We believe it utterly unlawful to separate from the Church of England, unless sinful terms of communion were imposed. To speak freely, I myself find more life in the Church prayers than in the exten-

porary prayers of the Dissenters. Nay, I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works than in what are vulgarly called Gospel sermons. That term is now become a mere cant word. I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal, that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ and His blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine Gospel sermon!' Surely the Methodists have not so learnt Christ? We know no Gospel without salvation from sin. I wish you would seriously consider that little tract, 'Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England.' Those reasons were never answered yet, and I believe they never will be."

WARNED BY THE PLANETS.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Poor old Sir Varney had been dead and buried for two months—buried down in the Drummond graveyard, at his own old country-house in Sussex.

The summer grasses were springing up thick and green upon his grave, and a showy tomb-stone, bearing a flattering inscription, marked the spot, erected by the loving remembrance of his wife.

Lady Drummond had mourned her husband's sudden death with apparent sincerity, and now, after two months had gone by, although the sharp edge of her sorrow had worn off, her crapes and bon-bazins were voluminous; and whenever she drove out her pale, beautiful face was shut away from all admiring eyes by her heavy widow's veil.

An object of great interest now was my Lady Cecilia, for she had come into possession of all her husband's estates, which were very valuable, and also because of some old entail it was decided that Auckland Oaks, and the chateau in France, would fall to her, in the event of Lady Marguerite Strathspay's death.

Lady Marguerite Strathspay was dead beyond a doubt. So Lady Cecilia was the possessor of an ample fortune, and one of the most fascinating women in England.

In all probability Lady Cecilia was thinking of this very thing as she sat one morning in her pretty dressing-room at The Firs, gazing through the open window toward the gray turrets of Strathspay Castle. The Earl of Strathspay had almost entirely recovered from his perilous illness, and had ordered his carriage to be sent down that afternoon, to take him home to the castle.

Lady Neville and Pearl had gone out for a drive, and the gentlemen visitors were shooting in the grounds, and the earl and his lovely hostess had the rambling old house all to themselves.

Lady Cecilia sat at the open window, her dark brows heavy with perplexed thought. At last she stood upon the ground which she had bartered her very soul to gain. There was not a single obstacle between her and the man she still loved. Although he had forsaken her and stabbed her proud heart by his indifference years before, she still loved him with all the wild passion of her selfish nature.

For a whole month, while he had been lying helpless, she had been his ministering angel; watching at his bedside, and anticipating his slightest wish, with a subdued and sorrowful gentleness that had touched the proud earl's heart to the very core.

Lady Cecilia knew just what advantage she had gained, for she was eminently a shrewd and sharp-eyed woman. She had watched her patient very narrowly beneath her dark, curling lashes; and she knew that his heart was more susceptible to her influence than it ever would be again. To use a common phrase, she knew that the iron was hot, and she must strike then or never. If he left her house and returned to the world uncommitted by word or act, she would lose him. The siren knew that full well, and it cost her a bitter pang to confess that after all her efforts the influence she had gained was very short-lived. Once out of her presence, delivered from the spell of her sorceries, and the Earl of Strathspay's heart would be beyond her control.

"I will not lose him now," she thought, clutching her hands in very desperation, "after all I have dared—all I have done—I will not fail in the end."

She arose and closed her casement, shutting out the green June landscape and the distant turrets of the castle, and rang her bell for her maid.

Dundas entered almost immediately, with her lithe, panther-like movements and dark, inscrutable face.

"Dundas," said her lady, seating herself in an immense velvet chair, "I want you to dress me; find something pretty and airy, and do my hair to correspond. I want a becoming toilet; you understand?"

Dundas nodded reflectively, wondering inwardly

what new freak her handsome mistress had on hand. She went about the toilet in earnest, and produced a marvel. A morning robe of pure white, with just the faintest suggestion of mourning here and there; delicate laces at the throat and wrists, and ornaments of jet and gold; the hair one careless, rolling mass of braids and curly, adorned by a spray of odorous, creamy white hyacinths were the result.

Lady Drummond, sitting before the mirror, smiled approvingly, and complimented her attendant on her skill.

Then she arose, and, arming herself with a little wafer of chased silver inlaid with gold, upon which were two tiny crystal-glasses, and an exquisite little flask filled with rare old wine, she crossed to the boudoir in which the earl spent his mornings, and read for admittance.

"Come in!" was the response.

She entered with the step of a fawn.

Lord Strathspay lay face downward on a velvet couch, in a fit of miserable despondency. The world seemed very hopeless on that fair June morning to this noble peer, and he was half regretting that his life had been spared, it seemed so utterly miserable and worthless. He struggled up to his feet to welcome Lady Cecilia.

"Now, my lord," she cried, chidingly, "is this obeying my orders?" putting down her sparkling service and advancing to his side. "Didn't I tell you yesterday that I would not suffer you to mope and meditate? and here you are at it again! Come, you need not deny it!"

The earl smiled bitterly.

"I do not deny it, Lady Drummond," he replied; "I was only this moment regretting that you saved my life."

She looked at him, her fine eyes full of tender reproach—such a lovely, winning, bewildering creature, with the creamy hyacinths in her hair, and the odour of spring clinging to her dainty garments.

Lord Strathspay, as we have said, was by nature a gay and pleasure-loving man. He was also a passionate admirer of feminine beauty, and Lady Drummond's that morning was resplendent. The sight of her thrilled the very blood in his veins, and his moody eyes brightened with admiration.

"Now, Angus," she said—she called him Angus at times, on the strength of their old acquaintance.

"Now, Angus, is that grateful, to say the least? If I have saved your life, you might appreciate the gift, if only for my sake."

"You saved my life undoubtedly, Lady Cecilia," the earl replied, "and I never can be grateful enough—I would do anything on earth to repay you—but, alas! my life is a poor gift now, it is so utterly unhappy and aimless."

She laid her slender, white hand on his arm with the shy, timid grace of a girl.

"Angus," she said, her thrilling voice just above a whisper, her eyes running over with tears, "is there nothing—noting that I can do to make you happy?"

"You have made me happy," replied the mole-blind earl, unconscious of what she meant; "I am always happy, as every one else is, in your presence, Lady Cecilia; but when I go away my old troubles and torments will get the better of me again."

"Then why go away?—why leave me? Why not let me always make you happy? Oh, Angus, Angus!" and she clung to his arm and buried her burning face in the cushions, "do you remember the hour we parted at old Cavendish Manor, so many weary years ago? Since that hour my life has been a torture, a mockery, and I never shall be happy again unless—unless—"

She broke into a storm of passionate sobbing, leaving the sentence unfinished.

Lord Strathspay rose to his feet in grave wonder, confused, irresolute. Should he take her to his heart, this lovely, bewildering woman, who had loved him so long? Should he bury the dead past and be happy himself again?

For one brief moment he wavered, and then, like a pallid spectre, that undying memory arose before him. The white, hopeless face of the wife he had adored looked out through the grated bars of a mad-house. No, there could never be another love for him!

"I am sorry for this, Lady Drummond," he said, gravely. "I am your true friend, and I would lay down my life to serve you; but never more in this world can there be another love, another hope for me. That is all past. But for you there is a cloudless future, and you will soon be strong and hopeful again."

He crossed to the table and filled the tiny glasses with the rare old wine.

"Come, Lady Drummond," he said, kindly, "and let us pledge our friendship before we part. I hear my carriage on the drive below, and I may as well say farewell at once."

She arose and dashed the passionate tears from her cheeks.

"I beg your pardon, my lord," she said, accepting the glass and draining it; "I am so weak and unhappy, and shall be so lonely when you are gone. But," she added, "I must shut up. The Firs and run away to London."

The earl drank his wine, uttering some polite and complimentary words, then he took her hand and raised it to his lips.

"Good-bye, Lady Drummond, and may Heaven reward you for all your kindness."

"Good-bye, my lord; but you must soon drive over again. You shall have this as my parting gift," she added, detaching the spray of hyacinths from her hair and putting it in his button-hole. "Now I must run away and see Lady Neville. Oh, dear, I wish you all could remain!"

And away she flew, with her graceful, gliding step, smiling radiantly, with the tear-drops on her cheeks.

But once within her own chamber a terrible change came over her smiling face. It grew almost livid, and her eyes glared like those of an enraged panther in her wild passion and disappointment.

"Oh," she cried, in an awful, sibilant whisper, her hands blanched and her teeth set, "I have failed! I have stained my soul with murder, I have humbled my woman's pride; and, after all, I have failed!"

She threw herself into a chair, and rocked backward and forward in her humiliation, a piteous sight to see. Then she started up again, her eyes at white heat.

"Earl of Strathspay!" she hissed, menacing some invisible object with her clenched hand, "you shall die for this! Nothing will wipe out this insult but your heart's blood, and I'll have it if I lose my own in the effort!"

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

We left Judith lying in a swoon before the door of one of the many cells in the Lancaster Moor Asylum.

When she recovered her senses she was on a couch in the head matron's room, and good Mrs. Thatcher was bending over her and crying like a baby, and Doctor Penrysh was compounding a composing draught at a table in one corner.

As Judith arose to a sitting posture he brought it to the bedside.

"Here, madam," he said, curtly, putting the glass to her lips, "drink this, if you please—twill strengthen your nerves. Women like you," he added as Judith swallowed it, "should never visit insane asylums."

"Doctor," said Judith, quietly, her brown eyes filled with their old steadfast light, "I did not swoon from fright; it was because I recognized the face of my dearest friend, one whom I have mourned as being dead for years."

"What?" questioned the doctor, sharply; "the countess you were inquiring for?"

"No, sir—not the countess; it was a man—and a faint dusky rose to her pale cheeks—"the face of a man that I saw; and, doctor," she added, solemnly, "unless I am in a dream, or insane myself, it was the face of Hendrick Dixon, my affianced husband, whose death I have mourned for thirteen years."

There was a certain quiet dignity in the girl's demeanour that won respect for her, a pathos and truth in her steadfast eyes that touched even Doctor Penrysh's heart.

"Dixon!" he reflected. "Dixon! Yes, there is a man here by that name. Let's see—he's been here for years—a seaman, or something of that sort—sent here from the Seaman's Hospital."

Judith got on her feet very quietly, but her face was as white as death.

"Come," she said, imperatively, "take me to him at once!"

"And have you swooning on my hands again," cried the doctor, impatiently. "Wait!"

But Judith did not heed him. She motioned to the keeper, and he obeyed, leading the way down the corridor. The doctor followed—so did Mrs. Thatcher, in a maze of bewildered astonishment. They passed down the dusty hall, between two long rows of cells, from which the poor creatures were gazing out, and presently they came to that window; but it was unoccupied. Swift as thought Judith approached it.

"Hendrick!" she called, her voice thrilling with unutterable tenderness, "Hendrick!"

There was a quick movement within, and a pale, startled face looked out upon them. One moment they stood thus, face to face, eye to eye, these two, so fondly devoted to each other, so long and sorely parted. A slow light of reason and recognition and unspeakable joy began to dawn in the poor fellow's patient eyes.

"Judith!" he half sobbed; "why, it is Judith!"

Then he reeled where he stood, gasped once or twice, and fell heavily to the floor within.

"He needed a shock, and he's got it," said Doctor Penryth, now thoroughly interested, as he unlocked the cell door; "and I'll wager my head he's a sane man when he comes round!"

Doctor Penryth was right. A week later, in the golden glamour of a June twilight, Hendrick and Judith sat side by side on the rear porch of the "White Hart" inn.

Judith was dressed with charming taste, in a brown silk that had a golden tint just suited to her silken-brown hair, with the daintiest of linen cuffs and collars, and a pretty little cluster of daisies in her bosom, and another amid the heavy braids that crowned her head.

Her cheeks wore a bright flush, and her steadfast eyes were filled with a beaming light that made her whole face beautiful. Her hands were clasped fondly about her lover's arm, as if she never again meant to suffer him to leave her.

She had heard his story, and it was a brief and simple one.

The "Victoria" took fire on her homeward voyage, and while he was striving to save others Hendrick was struck down by a burning spar.

After that blow upon his head all the world was a blank.

He was picked up, cared for by the crew of an English vessel, carried home to England, and consigned to the treatment of the surgeons in the Seamen's Hospital.

But his malady was beyond their skill; he was gentle, kindly, tender, but his mind and memory had both utterly gone.

After a time he was transferred to the insane asylum; and there during all the weary years in which poor Judith had mourned his death he was shut up, a man who had no past, no future, whose mind was a blank.

But the poor fellow's love rose supreme above the wreck of his mind and memory—the sight of Judith's face, and the sound of her voice, moved him for the first time in thirteen dreary years.

Sitting beside her in the June twilight, he watched her with a tender, childlike devotion that was touching to see.

"You are my all, Judith," he said, his voice low and tender; "and I like to have it so. Everything else, all my past life, is a blank—I cannot recall a single memory. It is as if I were out to sea, Judith, with the thick black of a midnight storm all around me, and only one bright star. You are my star, Judith, I want nothing else beside."

Judith's happy eyes overflowed with tears.

"Oh, Hendrick," she replied, "what have I ever done to deserve this blessed joy? To think how I have mourned over your death, and never thought to see your dear face again. And here you sit beside me, with your hand in mine! Oh, my love, my darling, I will make you happy—so happy that you shall never regret your affliction."

He drew her to his heart in wordless bliss. The twilight fell slowly over the blue Lancashire hills and over the distant waters of the Irish Sea; and the river below babbled garrulously between its grassy banks. Judith, hearing it, shuddered.

"Ah, me," she whispered, "shouldn't I be the happiest woman in the wide world this blessed hour if she could have lived! My poor lady! If I might have looked upon her sweet face once more!"

The river babbled on, and the twilight deepened; and Judith pondered sadly on the story the matron had told her of the sweet and heavenly patience of the poor lady who had called herself Countess of Strathspay.

She never murmured, never gave her keepers a moment's trouble, but her soul was consumed with longing to be free. "If ever there was sin," continued the matron, when brought to speak freely on the subject, "it was to keep that poor, harmless lady shut up in a madhouse. But her friends so ordered it," and the matron lowered her voice as she added, "They were great folks, and the managers understood that she was to be kept here."

"But," she went on, "with all her patience and sweetness, she had a strong will, and she warned us that she would make her escape. She had a mission to accomplish, she said, and she would not die till it was done."

"Poor creature, she lived that way for years and years; one might as well dream of escape from the grave as from a mad-house! She tried it a dozen times, I suppose, but there were always sharp eyes upon her. At last she got possession of an old file and set to work at the lock of her cell. She could only work at night, and it must have taken her months and months, but she succeeded at last. She loosened the lock, and escaped from her cell and out of the building. How she ever got outside the gates is a mystery, but she did! There had been heavy rains for a week, and the waters were up everywhere; and I suppose she tried to cross the river on the

timbers of the bridge, and fell in. At any rate, her shawl was found tangled in the driftwood the day after her escape, and her body drifted ashore a week after."

Judith pondered over it with an aching pain in her heart as she sat there in the golden twilight that was closing in her wedding-day—her happy wedding-day.

Why should she be so blessed while her poor lady had suffered and died?

Her tears fell thick and fast, and she shuddered with horror as she heard the babbling river.

But this was her wedding-day, for she and Hendrick had that day been married by the village rector.

The "White Hart" inn was tidied up as it never had been before; and in the little parlour at the back of the bar Mrs. Thatcher was busy over a wedding supper, to the utter neglect of her black-eyed baby.

Judith had willed it so. She had money, her marriage dowry, received from the Earl of Strathspay, being still in bank, and as it was useful that she should always be at Hendrick's side it was proper that she should be his wife.

So, when the twilight deepened into darkness, and the candles were lit in the "White Hart" parlour, and Mrs. Thatcher had found time "to jump into her best gown," as she phrased it, the supper which had been prepared by Mrs. Thatcher was eaten, to the satisfaction of herself and everybody else.

"And, Thatcher," remarked the little woman, standing at the inn door with her baby in her arms on the following morning, watching Hendrick and Judith as they drove away, "I do say, Thatcher, that it be more like a book or a play than anything I ever saw in all my born days. That she should go up there and light upon her old sweetheart—whoever would a thought of such a thing?"

But Thatcher did not answer, to his wife's evident annoyance, for he was preoccupied just at that moment counting the golden guineas that the bride had left behind her as a parting present to the black-eyed baby.

(To be continued.)

FIGHTING WITH FATE.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A MOMENT of awful consternation succeeded the entrance of Grimrod into Miss Floyd's private parlour. The heiress stood up and looked at him with a wild and horrified visage. Miss Floyd's sinister visitor, Autonio Frivoli, sprang to his feet with a strange cry upon his lips.

And well might he and Miss Floyd tremble before the figure thus confronting them.

Lord Waldemar's business manager advanced into the pretty, rose-tinted room, and halted in the mingled glow of firelight and candlelight, grim and terrible, his lank figure looking strangely elongated, his thin lips curling in a sneer, his dark and evil face lighted up by his burning eyes.

If he had looked the picture of Mephistopheles before, he looked more than ever like it now.

To add to the strangeness and terror of his appearance he did not speak, but only looked from one to the other of the cowering pair with his horrible sneer and with his scorching gaze.

Unable to bear either, Miss Floyd uttered a shriek and tottered back to her silken lounge.

Antonio Frivoli glared around him, like a rat in a trap, swaying to and fro with some wild idea of escape.

"Allow me to introduce myself, Signor Frivoli," said Grimrod, at last, in a soft and silvery voice, which yet cut the air like a gleaming sword blade. "I am Nelson Grimrod, Lord Waldemar's business manager, at your service."

Frivoli's bloodless lips parted, but no sound came from them.

"I had halted for a moment under Miss Floyd's windows on my way home," continued Grimrod, still in that smooth, icy voice, "when I heard your singular bird-call, and beheld Miss Floyd appear upon her balcony. I heard your brief colloquy.

"When you climbed up the wall by the bands of ivy, and entered into Miss Floyd's private rooms, I, as the faithful servant and friend of Lord Waldemar, and the conservator of the family honour, crept up the ivy after you, and crouched in the balcony there just outside the window. I have had the pleasure of hearing your entire conversation with Miss Floyd, my dear Signor Frivoli, and I need not tell you how much I have been interested in your speculations and theories, nor how charmed I have been by the history of your thorough and singular researches."

The foreign adventurer had not the nerve or the brain of the British villain.

His teeth fairly chattered, and still his head moved from side to side in the vain search for some loop-hole of escape.

"I am at a loss to know my duty in this matter," resumed Grimrod, after an impressive pause. "I suppose I ought to alarm the house—to call up the servants—to arouse Lord Waldemar! It is, in fact, my duty to have this midnight intruder arrested as a burglar."

"If you try that game," said Frivoli, beginning to recover himself, and assuming a threatening air, which looked like the puny defiance of a child to the power of some strong and ruthless man, "I have some letters of Miss Floyd on my person which will prove to Lord Waldemar that I did not enter his house as a burglar but as his grand-daughter's lover."

"Ah, yes, the letters!" said Grimrod, easily. "You sold two of them to Miss Floyd. The price of the remaining eight is eight hundred pounds. As money seems to be your object, you will probably not be too particular as to who is the purchaser of your wares. I will buy them."

"You!"

"I. Miss Floyd is the representative of a grand old house. As her faithful servant and that of her grandfather, I will come to her assistance in this affair. I'll give you eight hundred pounds for the letters."

Frivoli drew a long breath, and began to feel more at his ease.

"If you mean business," he ejaculated, "you'll find me agreeable. When you came in you looked so much like Murder incarnate that I was afraid of you. If you've got the money with you I'll give you the letters now."

"Unfortunately," said Grimrod, showing his teeth in a strange smile, "I haven't the small sum you mention upon my person. But it is at my house, and you can go with me and get it."

"Well, yes; that is satisfactory enough," admitted Frivoli. "Of course you wouldn't carry such a sum about with you. But I'm not ready to go yet. I have something more to say to Miss Floyd."

Grimrod inclined his head and waited.

Miss Floyd had buried her face in the cushions of her lounge, and now upraised it, showing that she had heard all that had been said. She was trembling and frightened. She was even more terrified at Grimrod than at the adventurer, and more in awe of him than of Frivoli.

"What more can you have to say to me?" she asked, turning her gaze upon the foreigner.

"I may as well tell it before Mr. Grimrod. He has heard so much that I need not attempt to be secret in the rest I have to say," said Frivoli, more and more himself as his mind recovered its strength, and he began to feel his power. "I must repeat what I have before said—you are not the real heiress of the Waldemars. You are not Lord Waldemar's grand-daughter. You have not a drop of Floyd blood in your veins. As I said, I don't know or care who you are and who you are not. All I know is that you are in somebody else's place, and that I must be paid to keep the secret."

"It is not true," said Miss Floyd, cowering. "I am Lord Waldemar's grand-daughter. Tell him that I am, Mr. Grimrod."

"Mr. Grimrod can repeat the lesson a hundred times, but his assertion won't alter the facts," said Frivoli, doggedly. "And the facts are that Hilda Floyd's nurse was named Margaret Cropsey, and she was not the same person as Mrs. Henrietta Watchley; that Margaret Cropsey went to Malta with her young charge, and I have traced her to Valetta, where she is supposed to have died; that I believe her to be living to-day somewhere on the face of the earth, and I believe also that the real Hilda Floyd is living. A sharp detective might find them both. This is not all I have learned. The real Hilda Floyd was, at a year old, one of the daintiest little beauties that ever lived. She bore an astonishing resemblance to her father, which resemblance time must have deepened. She had her father's yellow hair—yours is drab; and she had black eyes—yours are blue."

"A singular discrepancy or alteration," said Grimrod, glancing at Miss Floyd's features. "I fancy you must have been misinformed, signor."

"I can prove what I say. I can procure affidavits from the fellow-lodger of Mrs. Floyd, and from the doctor who attended her at her last illness, before her removal to the hospital. They knew the child well, and remembered her perfectly. You saw them both at Trieste, Mr. Grimrod, while you were searching for the heiresses of Lord Waldemar. That search of yours seemed thorough and honest. You may be honest for all I know. But you are either dishonest or you have been tricked and cheated and duped into bringing yonder impostor into Lord Waldemar's house as his grand-daughter. You seem to be too sharp to be easily cheated; hence I conclude that

you have connived at the imposture. That yonder girl is an impostor I can prove. Now what will you and she give me to keep the secret?"

"I know of no secret in the matter," said Grimrod, coolly. "If I have been deceived in the identity of the heiress, which I won't allow, I must look for the real one. The matter is very simple, you see."

Frivoli's countenance fell.

"I shall have to depend upon Miss Floyd," he exclaimed. "She has got a nice birth here, and won't easily relinquish it. If she does not pay me what I demand I'll try to find the real heiress. A girl with golden hair and black eyes would be no difficult to trace, if I can only get the right clue to start with. I'll go back to Valets and find the name of every ship and captain leaving Malta at the date and day on which Margaret Cropey was sent away from the Valets hotel, the Floyd child in her arms, and her brain already turned with fever. I'll find every captain in turn, and question him. I am sure to find the girl in some hospital or asylum, living as a peasant in some country or other, or possibly a domestic servant here in England."

Hilda Floyd arose again, her eyes full of a sullen despatch, and the calmness of despair upon her.

"What do you want to keep this secret?" she demanded, regardless of Grimrod's gesture to her to remain silent. "What pay do you exact?"

"Not your hand in marriage," replied Frivoli. "If you were the true heiress I'd force you to marry me; but under the circumstances I shall do better to allow you to remain where you are. My price for absolute silence in the matter will be high. I cannot still the pangs of conscience, which will upbraid me for wrangling Lord Waldemar and the real Hilda Floyd, with any amount. I shall want an annuity for life of a thousand pounds a year."

Miss Floyd looked aghast.

"Where am I to find any such sum?" she exclaimed.

"Borrow it of your 'faithful servant,' Grimrod here," said Frivoli, "and pay him an exorbitant interest. You can pay back the original sum when you are safe and secure in your position as Baroness Waldemar. Mr. Grimrod, with all his integrity, will, I am sure, be willing to turn an honest penny in this way, the more especially as Margaret Cropey and the real Hilda Floyd may possibly both be dead, and he can give his conscience the benefit of the doubt."

Miss Floyd turned to the manager abruptly.

"You have heard all," she said. "Frivoli has proofs that I am not Hilda Floyd, but he will be silent if I pay him. Will you pay him for me? I will repay you in time, Mr. Grimrod, with heavy interest. You will have but to wait a few years. Grandpa can't last forever. And I promise you, if you will keep me in my present position, and help me out of this trouble, I will keep you always in your post as business manager, with double your present salary."

"I should want more," replied Grimrod. "I should demand a promise from you that you will marry whom I have chosen for you."

"I promise! I promise!" said the girl, eagerly.

"Then I will act for you in this matter. This fellow shall receive his annuity. I shall keep these letters as a guarantee of your good faith. The interview, so far as you are concerned, Miss Floyd, ends here. You can safely leave the affair in my hands, and go to bed and to sleep. Signor Frivoli, we will descend as we came, and go to my house. I will lead the way."

He bowed to the young lady, that odd sneer being still upon his lips, and withdrew to the balcony. He climbed over the railing, and slowly descended by the ivy branches, clinging to the trellis beneath until he reached the ground.

Frivoli, with a gay adieu to Miss Floyd, climbed over the balcony railing, and also began to descend. Grimrod, breathing hard, felt in the inner pocket of his coat for the pistol he usually carried on his person.

It was not there, having been left in his business coat. He withdrew his hand quickly, and the adventurer descended in safety to the ground.

"We will take a short cut to the house," said the manager, smoothly. "I am in haste to get possession of the letters. Are you staying at the village inn, signor?"

"Yes, I left my valise there," was the reply.

Grimrod conducted Frivoli through the park, which was dark and gloomy at that hour and chill with the sweeping March winds.

A brisk walk of half a mile brought them out at a small gate opening upon the public road.

Grimrod unlocked the gate with a key he produced from his pocket, and led Frivoli across the road to his own house, which was set back behind a charming lawn.

Grimrod's house had a deserted look, although the hall and office lamp burned dimly. His two servants, an old woman and her son, had gone to bed. He let himself into his house with a key, and ushered Frivoli into his office.

"I shan't be able to do anything about that annuity to-night," he said, closing the door and turning up the light. "How soon shall you want the first payment of the annuity?"

"Before I leave this neighbourhood," said Frivoli, uncommunicatively.

"I haven't the money in the house," said Grimrod, "and I don't dare give you a cheque for the amount, for fear of exciting comment. I prefer to pay you the money in gold or bank notes. You can stay at the village to-morrow, and command me again to-morrow evening, when I will have the thousand pounds ready for you. How will that suit you?"

"Very well. I want bank notes. They are easiest to carry."

"I have just eight hundred pounds in my safe," remarked Grimrod, "and you may produce the letters while I get the money."

He unlocked a cupboard or closet at one side of the room, the open door screening him from Frivoli's gaze. The adventurer sat down and took out his letters.

The lower portion of the closet opened by Grimrod was occupied by a heavy and broad fire-proof and burglar-proof safe. Above the safe were shelves which were covered with bottles of rare wines, jars of tobacco, boxes of cigars, and a few quality carved pipes. Grimrod opened his safe, and took out of a small locked drawer a tall goblet of Bohemian glass of great value and beauty. He took this glass in one hand and a corked bottle of wine and a corkscrew in the other, and brought them to the table at which the foreigner was seated.

"Help yourself, signor," he said, with a seemingly reluctant sort of hospitality. "It's a cold night, and I dare say you are chilled."

Without waiting for a reply, the manager went back to the closet and groped for several minutes in his safe.

Frivoli had a weakness for wine, to the use of which he was accustomed. But he was wary also. He examined the seal upon the bottle, and assured himself that it had not been tampered with. He turned the goblet upside down and blew in it, but it was dry and seemed clean. He did not notice that some transparent substance had dried upon the bottom. He uncorked the bottle and filled his glass, and as Grimrod lingered at the safe he sipped the liquor slowly and with evident relish.

Presently he finished the contents of his glass at a draught.

Grimrod came from the safe, with a packet of bank-notes in one hand and a Bohemian glass goblet, like the one before produced, in the other. This one had no drink substance within it. He filled his glass from the bottle Frivoli had opened, and drank off the wine with gusto.

"The real Rudelsheimer!" he remarked. "The letters now, signor. Here is the money."

The adventurer gave up the letters which Miss Floyd had written to him and received the money. He counted it over, declared it right, and stowed it away on his person.

Grimrod put away the letters in his safe, and the goblets also, locked the safe and the closet, and said:

"That is all for to-night. Come at this time tomorrow night, signor, and you'll find a thousand pounds waiting for you."

The adventurer arose, and Grimrod showed him out.

At the gate Frivoli halted and glanced back.

The manager was standing on the steps, lamp in hand, the light falling on his face and upon his features, and in his eyes gleamed the terrible light that had before frightened the foreigner. He shuddered now, and muttered:

"He looks like a malignant, triumphant demon! There is malice in his eyes!"

He hurried from the place as if pursued.

Grimrod, laughing merrily, went into the house and secured his door.

"That fellow is disposed of," he said to himself. "That danger is met and overcome. It's true I am eight hundred pounds the poorer, but these letters will be worth the money. They place the girl completely in my power. There'll be no more insolence toward me—no more talk of discharging me when she becomes Lady Waldemar. She is henceforth my puppet. She will marry Darrel Moor at my bidding. After all, the little adventure brings good to me. As for the adventurer himself, he exemplifies the old saying that 'a little learning is a dangerous thing.' He knew too much!"

He went to bed and to sleep.

The next morning, Hilda Floyd, looking weary but

pretty in her cashmere morning dress, presided at the manor breakfast-table.

Lord Waldemar breakfasted in his own room, but Darrel Moor and Mrs. Watchley were in their places.

The butler brought in the letter-bag, and Miss Floyd unlocked it, dispensing its contents.

There were letters for Lord Waldemar and for Moor, and several newspapers which were to be taken up to the baren. Miss Floyd put them all back into the bag, excepting Moor's letters, and gave them into the butler's hands. Yet he lingered, his countenance betraying some excitement.

"What's the matter, Floss?" asked Darrel Moor.

"Is my uncle ill?"

"Oh, no, it's not that, sir," said the butler; "but I went over for the bag myself to the village, and there's a great excitement there, sir. There was a foreigner stopping at the Prince Consort, sir, a dark sort of chap, who came from London last evening, sir. No one knew him, and he seemed to know no one, though they do say he was most particular anxious in his inquiries about this family, sir——"

"That's odd," said Moor.

"Yes, sir; very odd, sir. That's what I say to myself. He wasn't here for no good purpose, asking close questions about my young lady and about you, sir, and even about Mr. Grimrod, going into his pedigree and his wife's pedigree, and digging up, as one might say, Mr. Grimrod's little baby that died sixteen years ago! Well, this curious foreigner—which I think he was a burglar in disguise, and his name, they say, was Antonio Frivoli, or some such thing—was found dead in his bed at the Prince Consort this morning. His pocket was chock-full of money—eight hundred odd pounds—and no one knows what he came here for, nor what he was about with him. The doctor says he died of heart-disease. The crown's verdict will be he died by 'visitation of Providence.' And all that asphyxied knows is that he's gone dead, and his servant, if he had any, are dead with him."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Waldemar town house in Park Lane was a fine old mansion with a double front, and rising high flights of steps, which was guarded by two ferocious-looking stone lions. The house had been closed since the death of the present lord's predecessor, a period of some five years, the present lord having been without family, and preferring to lodge at a private hotel just out of Piccadilly, and to dine at his club.

But now that he had his acknowledged granddaughter and heiress upon his hands, Lord Waldemar had sent from Yorkshire his housekeeper and a staff of servants to put the town house in order and prepare it for the reception of his enlarged family.

And upon the Monday which he had mentioned as the date of his return to town his lordship arrived at his Park Lane residence, accompanied by Miss Floyd, Mrs. Watchley, and Miss Floyd's maid.

Grimrod had remained in Yorkshire, but was likely to be soon in London on business.

Darrel Moor had remained at the manor until the departure of the family, and had then gone to Lancashire, full of anxiety in regard to Honor, the ill success of his valet having been duly reported to him.

Upon the day after the installation of Miss Floyd as Lord Waldemar's town house the bares called upon his kinswoman, the Marchioness of Roxburgh, to consult with her concerning Miss Floyd.

He found her ladyship confined to her bed with rheumatism, and discovered that the illness was likely to be protracted for weeks, and even months, it being of a chronic description.

The marchioness was forced to decline the post of chaperone to Miss Floyd, declaring that she should go to Nice as soon as she could be moved.

The baron re-entered his carriage and returned to Park Lane.

When passing the house of Lady Thaxter he pulled the check-string and alighted, with the resolve to carry his diseas to her ladyship for solace.

Lady Thaxter had been his late wife's relative, and Lord Waldemar esteemed her as peculiar among women.

He wondered that he had not asked her to chaperone his grand-daughter.

He had been for years an almost constant visitor at the Thaxter house when in town, and had grown to entertain a sincere affection for young Sir Hugh Tregaron, whom he frequently met there.

He was admitted into the house, and ushered into the drawing-room.

As it chanced, Lady Thaxter was alone, seated near the fire, busy with some worsted embroidery. She arose at Lord Waldemar's entrance, dropping her work, and greeting him with a beaming face and outstretched hands.

"I was just thinking of you, my dear baron," she said, heartily. "I am very glad to see you."

Lord Waldemar's stern broze face lighted up and he replied to her with equal warmth.

Lady Thaxter placed a deep-cushioned chair for him at the corner of the hearth, and resumed her seat.

"Do you know," she said, smilingly, yet half reproachfully, "that I am deeply offended with you, my lord, for not giving me an opportunity of congratulating you upon your great happiness? I never even knew that Wallace was dead, or had left a daughter, until I read a paragraph in the *Court Journal*. Surely you might have written to me."

"I don't know who put the paragraph in the *Journal*," said the baron. "These reporters must be ubiquitous. I hadn't written the news to any one, excepting indeed Lady Roxburgh."

"That accounts for it," said Lady Thaxter. "Lady Roxburgh's house is a perfect lysum, as one might call it, for all the rising men of genius, whether journalists, authors, or artists. And now, my dear friend, I beg you to break the silence of years, and let me speak of poor Wallace. You do not shrink from his name as you did, I see."

"Because he's dead!" declared the baron. "Death condones all faults."

Lady Thaxter sighed. There was that in his lordship's tone and manner that showed that even in his grave Wallace Floyd was unforgiven by his father.

"How long has Wallace been dead?" she asked.

"Sixteen years, I did not know that he was dead even until lately. We won't speak of him, my dear Lady Thaxter. You and I never agreed about the justice of my treatment of my son. He was ungrateful, wicked, and degenerate."

"And he died under the weight of his father's curse!" said Lady Thaxter, gravely. "Poor boy! poor, sensitive boy! How affectionate he was! How he loved you, Lancloot! I have always been sure that there must have been some secret agency at work to render him so disobedient and mischievous. That marriage was not like him."

"The secret agency was that of the Delilah he married," responded Lord Waldemar, grimly.

"And she is dead too—poor girl!"

"Yes, she died six months after his death. They are buried side by side at Trieste, and one stone marks their graves. I sent my agent there lately—not to see to the graves—Wallace Floyd is nothing to me now—but to discover my grand-daughter."

"But, Lancloot, surely, surely you will have the bones of your son and his young wife brought back to England."

"Never! What their child may do in time I cannot tell, but while I live they shall lie where they now do. Wallace Floyd ceased to be my son when he married Janet Arlyn."

Lady Thaxter's eyes moistened. She had loved young Wallace Floyd, and it pained her to think of his neglected grave in far Trieste.

"Oh, Lancloot!" she murmured. "I cannot understand how, with your generous, noble nature, so full of tenderness at times, you can still be so bitter and revengeful toward your own flesh and blood, your own and only son. I believe half this hardness is put on. You were deeply angered by Wallace's inconsiderate marriage, but I have heard that Miss Arlyn was a gentle, trusting little creature, as shy as a bird, not at all like her wild, rough father. Why should your enmity to her father be extended to her?"

"She had the Arlyn blood; that was enough. Were there not fair women enough in England, that my son must clandestinely marry the daughter of the man I hated, and make me a laughing-stock of half Yorkshire? Was it not indecent in him to bring under my roof, as my daughter, one of that vile race? Forgive him? Never!"

His passionate voice rang through the room.

Lady Thaxter was silent for a brief space; then she asked:

"Is Wallace's daughter like him?"

"Not at all. She is all Arlyn."

"She is gentle, thin, and shy, and sweet?"

"By no means. She is bold, insolent, forward, as well as secretive, and, I think, false."

Lady Thaxter shuddered.

"Lancloot," she said, gently, "do not let your hatred of her parents tempt you to be enmity unjust to the poor young girl. She is your direct descendant, your heiress, your successor. I am sure you misjudge her. Is she beautiful?"

"If you like dolls—yes. You think me bitter and unjust, Julia, but I am only honest. The girl has not a grain of sincerity or honesty in her. My son was truthful; she is not. She has depth, but it is that depth which comes from a scheming nature. You look horrified, yet I speak the truth. I will tell you what I have told to no human being," and Lord Waldemar's lips trembled under his frost-white

moustache, and his stern eyes were wet with sudden tears. "When I found that my son was dead, and that there existed upon this earth a lineal descendant of my own, his child, I could have overlooked the Arlyn taint in her blood, and taken her to my heart. Julia, I am ashamed to own it, but my soul yearned for the girl. I would not confess it to myself, but I longed for her coming. Had I found her what my son once was I should have made her my idol. But she had the worst qualities of her parents. There is no look of my son in her features. She is

wit both found utterance from his lips. He looked indeed a "lion lord" with his stern, impassioned face, his glowing eyes, his earnest manner.

A little later, Sir Hugh Tregaron came in with Honor Glint, whom he was anxious to introduce to his friend Lord Waldemar.

The old baron arose and held out his hand in a warm greeting to the young Cornish baronet.

Lady Thaxter introduced her young guest to Lord Waldemar.

The baron looked full into the pure, proud, tender face, with its ripples of golden hair and its vivid black eyes, and started back, strangely pallid.

The sweet, spirited face recalled to him his lost son with a cruel force. He drew his breath hard.

"I beg your pardon, Lady Thaxter," he said, huskily, "but I did not hear the young lady's name."

"It is Miss Glint—Honor Glint," said Lady Thaxter, distinctly. "You see the marvellous resemblance, my lord? I noticed it directly. Miss Glint comes from Lancashire."

Lord Waldemar compelled himself to bow and to speak calmly, but for the first time in his life a sickening faintness swept over him, and his brain reeled and his sight grew dim. He sat down abruptly.

The Hungarian countess had watched the scene with startled, troubled eyes, and now said, softly:

"Does the young lady remind you of some one, my lord?"

"Yes," replied the baron, wiping his cold, wet brow; "she reminds me of one who is dead—of my only son, madam. The resemblance is positively startling. I could almost think my son's eyes were looking up at me out of the girl's face. But resemblances, even such as this, are not uncommon, I dare say."

"Oh, no, they are not uncommon," returned the countess, with a long, fluttering sigh, and an anxious shadow in the depths of her blue eyes. "I read in the *Journal*, my lord, that your beautiful young grand-daughter will enter society this season. Does she very closely resemble your son, her father?" she asked, curiously. "If so, she will be charmed to find a counterpart to herself in this young stranger."

"She does not resemble her father, madam," replied Lord Waldemar. "She—she resembles her mother."

His bitterness spoke in those last few words. He uttered them angrily, and a sudden flame darted from his eyes.

"For you did not like your daughter-in-law, I see," said the Hungarian countess.

"No, madam. I hated her and all her family!" and the suppressed voice of the baron quivered with a sudden anger, before which even Lady Rothamere shrank back in affright. "I beg your pardon, madam. Lady Thaxter will explain to you why I am so sore upon this point, and I beg you again to forgive my rudeness."

His lordship lingered yet a while, the conversation drifting into more pleasant channels. At last he took his leave, Lady Thaxter accompanying him to the head of the stairs.

"There is no idiot like an old idiot," thought Lord Waldemar as he made his way to the street. "I believe I have fallen in love with that beautiful Hungarian countess. I am not so very old; she must be thirty. I wonder if she would laugh at me if I were to propose to her in due time to marry me. Older men than I am marry every day. And that beautiful young girl, Miss Glint—I never saw so radiant a vision! If Hilda had been like her! She has my son's eyes and my son's hair! My heart fairly yearned over her!"

He sighed profoundly, and his features quivered in mental pain.

Meanwhile Lady Thaxter returned to her guests.

"What did you think of your 'hon. lord,' countess?" she asked, lightly.

"I liked him," was the rather constrained reply. "He answers my highest expectations. But he seems to have a fearful temper, dear Lady Thaxter."

"He has a wicked, hot temper," said Lady Thaxter; "but he is nevertheless grand-souled, generous, full of kindness and genial impulses. He was bitten by the clandestine marriage of his only son to the daughter of a man whom he hated, and he has never recovered from the blow. He denounces his poor young daughter-in-law to me this very afternoon as a Delilah, and regards her very memory with a consuming hatred. He hates his grand-daughter because, he says, she is an Arlyn. I am anxious to see her. I shall call upon her to-morrow, and have her dine with us en famille in a day or two. Poor lonely young creature. I am to chaperone her, and I shall try to make up to her for the love she evidently lacks in her own home."

(To be continued.)



[FOILED.]

BETRAYED BY A RING.

THEY stood in the ambient rays of a harvest moon, which bathed the singing streamlet at their feet in a crystalline light, and lent a new beauty to the lilies and buttercups planted at the water's edge by some fairy hand. In the young fir grove in their rear a nightingale was making melodious music for its listening and devoted mate, and the frequent plashes in the water told that the finny denizens of the deep were imitating the feathered warbler in the keeping of unseasonable hours.

How long they—the stately man and beautiful, regal woman—had stood in silence perhaps no one save themselves and the nightingales knew, and it was evident that the uttering of a harsh word had separated them, for they stood a short distance apart—she flashing a look of indignation upon him, he trying to meet it with a borrowed calmness.

At last the tableau was dissipated by the separation of his pale lips, and, as he spoke, he moved just the least perceptible distance towards her.

"You believe all that she said?" and his gaze wandered into the grove, as though he sought a form connected with his interrogative—among its recesses.

"I believe the terrible accusation that fell from her lips and drove the colour from your cheeks," answered the woman, in slow and measured accents. "That woman looks as if she could not speak falsely—she, the wreck of that which was once beautiful—she, as she calls herself, your wife. Now, Herbert Dare, what is your defence? You've had time to frame an able one."

A bitter sneer followed close upon her last sentence, which caused the lips of her auditor to twitch with pain, and with an alacrity which brought a look of surprise into her eyes he sprang to his defence.

"Ellen Dunning, I think you might spare your sneers—they cut me to the heart," he said, "and

there they rankle, inflicting wounds which never can be healed. I have no defence to plan; what I would have said in her presence had she tarried awhile I say now, but in cooler frame of mind. Until the sudden appearance of the dark form that sprang from yonder clump of bushes I never knew that such a woman as she existed. Until a few moments since I never gazed upon that face—sent thither to wreak our happiness on the breakers of misery; but from what motive I cannot conceive."

He paused a moment, in which it seemed as though he expected her to speak; but as she stood statue-like and silent before him he resumed:

"If there existed no secret plot against you or me why came that black-robed impostor hither? I might declare her mad, but she is in the possession of her senses and is an agent of those who have shaped her into a tool with which they hoped to accomplish cunning designs. She never was, nor is she now my wife."

As he finished his dark eyes met hers, and for a moment silence followed.

"Herbert Dare," she said, at last, speaking with a Titan effort. "I dare not, I will not, believe that black-robed and death-faced woman an impostor. Therefore from this hour we are strangers."

"We who have loved so passionately," he almost groaned.

In the trembling of her queenly form her eyes sought the lilies which her little foot in her whirlwind of indignation had crushed.

"As you deem it," she muttered.

"Then, Ellen, I go," he said, his voice telling how hard it was to dissolve the golden dreams of the old love. "I may return, I may fall amid the devoted sons of Leonidas; but whither this shipwrecked life be borne thy face shall never be absent from my sight. It is useless now to say that, despite the deeds of this night, my heart clings to the old love—it will never twine its affection about a new. I hope

you are sincere in your belief, Ellen; but I thought you would not fling me away without a chance to refute, at some future time, the false accusation. I thought you loved me better than all this. I thought I knew a woman's heart. Alas! how I have deceived myself! I have nothing to bind me to home now—nothing to prevent me from facing the Turks in the trenches of the Morea. Farewell!"

The word startled Ellen Dunning; she was not prepared to hear it spoken so suddenly, for she was waiting for him to make another appeal.

As he spoke the last word he stretched forth no hand, he gave her no parting look, but turned on his heel and walked away, leaving her alone under the moon, gazing in silence after him.

He never turned his head to note again the woman he had loved long and devotedly, but kept straight forward, and at last she lost sight of him altogether.

Then Ellen Dunning started forward as though it was her intention to recall her lover, and give him a chance to refute the startling accusation of the black-robed apparition; but on a sudden she paused.

"No, no, let him go," she said, a flush of indignation mounting to her temples. "If he really leaves me it will be no difficult matter for me to find another love. I did love Herbert Dare. I believe that that love cannot easily be plucked from my heart, but I will never wed a man who has been so terribly accused. How that woman frightened me when she suddenly threw herself between us, and drove the colour from his cheek by proclaiming herself his lawfully wedded wife—outraged deserted by him! Yes, go, Herbert Dare, go and die in the trenches of the Morea, not as the accepted lover of Ellen Dunning, but as one under heaven's ban, terribly, and I feel rightly accused."

The beautiful woman believed her own words, though that belief cost her many a heart pang. Perhaps she had been too impetuous in her action, and she was not the creature to acknowledge fault until every device to escape such acknowledgment had vanished.

This, with other foibles, she had inherited from her father, but Herbert Dare had hoped to break her of them when he had made her his wife.

Whence the black-robed accuser had come, or whether beyond the grove she had vanished, Ellen could not divine. The woman's face was strange to her; its deep furrows of want and suffering wore still impressed on her mind, and the dramatic manner in which she had faced Herbert Dare and called herself his wife confirmed her belief, as already written.

Herbert Dare crossed a meadow, rich with the dews of night, and found himself near his home. He wondered if Ellen stood yet on the boundaries of her father's estate, or whether she had sought her chamber to pen a letter begging his return.

In all their loving this was their first estrangement, and Herbert Dare resolved that it should be the last. After her bitter words he would give her no chance to recall him to her side, he would teach her a lesson, though it cost him his life.

"Time will make plain the one great error of her life," he muttered as he emerged from his home with a travelling-bag at his side. "If time don't, eternity surely will. Eternity reveals everything. I forgot that time did not."

With a glance in the direction of the young fir grove he hurried down the narrow, deserted street, and at length gained the neat little railway station.

It was quite near midnight now, and several draway persons were on the platform, waiting for the twelve-o'clock train.

The purchase of his ticket occupied Herbert Dare but a moment, then he strolled down the moonlit platform, pondering deeply over the occurrences of the night.

He heard the approaching train, started from his reverie, and hurried toward it. He grasped his valise and sprang into a carriage, throwing up a sash as he dropped into a seat.

"Good-bye, Ellen, with all thy memories," he said, aloud, as his eye swept the platform. "I may never—"

A moment later he was out again, and his hand closed upon the arm of a sombre-dressed woman who had tried to gain the ladies' waiting-room.

"Come, tell me all," he cried as he drew her to the edge of the platform, clothed in rich moonlight. "Tell me who sent you to the trysting-place with a budget of poisoning falsehoods. Tell me all, woman, or, by the dark work of this night, I will choke you to death."

There was the flash of something desperate in the accused one's eyes, and in his eagerness to gain his ends he gripped the woman's skinny arm until she shrieked with pain.

"Loosen your hold, and I'll tell all," she said. "Look! They're coming this way."

Her last sentence caused Herbert Dare to turn his head, and in doing so he loosened his grip on her

arm, when with the help of all the strength she could summon she wrenched the prisoned member from his fingers and darted down the line with the speed of the hunted roe.

"Confound me! confound her!" grased Herbert Dare as he stood dumbfounded on the end of the platform and watched the deeting form disappear in the moonlight. "I might have wrung everything out of her, but it's too late now!"

He darted towards the train, and threw himself into the seat with a groan of bitter disappointment.

But once during that night he spoke aloud. A fellow traveller in the seat just in advance of him asked:

"Where are you bound, sir?"

"To the Mores—to help the Greeks."

The old man gave him an incredulous stare, then settled back into his seat, muttering:

"Crazy! They'll shut him up when he gets to London."

Herbert smiled grimly at these words.

Time flies so swiftly that one scarcely notices the noiseless flight, and the present is almost continually reminding us of the past.

Thus it was with Ellen Dunning. One year after the scene just witnessed she promised to become the bride of Gerald Harrison, a young man of attractive qualities, and supposed to be possessed of wealth. He appeared to the villagers of Eiling as unannounced as the midnight meteor, and almost before Ellen knew or comprehended her actions he had slipped the heavy wedding-ring of gold over her tapering finger.

This took place in the moonlight of the old trysting-spot, and quick as a flash of summer lighting the past came back to her and floated before her eyes—a vivid panoramic portraiture of the scene it had in store.

Again she felt upon her radiant brow the betrothal kiss given by one who now fought for the liberty of a people bound to him by no kindred ties; she heard again her first promise to become a bride. In a moment she lived over again her love life with Herbert Dare; she saw the black-robed woman as she sprang between; she heard his last farewell. She saw more than this. She saw a force of turbanned Moslems filled with their fatalist ideas rush upon a battered rampart, behind which stood a little band of Greeks, awaiting the onset with the determination of despair.

Quickly the scene changed; the contending forces gave blow for blow, death thrust for death thrust; but the bravery of the Greek availed naught. One by one they fell, until at last, like Leouidas at Thermopylae, but one Greek crossed swords with the Turk. But was he a Greek?

No! As the brave fellow fell, struck by a dozen scimetars, she saw his face—the face of Herbert Dare.

The scene brought a light cry to Ellen's lips; it drove the rosy hue of health from her cheeks and drew an exclamation from Gerald Harrison.

He thought he saw her trembling and about to fall, and his hand encircled her arm.

"Ellen, you are faint."

His words banished the vision, and in a moment she had recovered her wonted self-possession.

"I am not faint, Gerald," she said, her voice as clear as ever, bearing witness to her words. "I saw—well, no difference what I saw, Gerald. We will be happy soon."

"Yes, superlatively happy, girl," he said, and then, at Ellen's request, they left the edge of the grove and crossed the dewy meadows to her home.

From that hour the heiress of Oakhill shunned the old trysting-spot; the past was now ever before her eyes, and she would have given her inherited gold to live over once more the scene described in the first part of our story.

She never knew until this hour what abundance of love she bore Herbert Dare, and while she realized it she grew cold to her present lover.

Had she to live over the past again Herbert should not have left her side without the granting of the boon he had craved—time in which to answer the charges of the woman in black—time to prove her an impostor.

But it was too late now, for she had seen him trampled by the bigoted sons of the crescent—he, like Ney, the "bravest of the brave."

Gerald Harrison noted the change in his promised bride, yet he spoke not of it to her—he seemed to care more for her hand than for her heart. He knew that the little member would open a river of gold to his command.

Ellen had noticed the resemblance which her lover bore to the "woman in darkness," and the more she regarded it the stronger a certain belief fastened itself, leech-like, into her mind.

At length she tore all the love she ever bore him from her heart and told him that she could not love

him, that one great error of her life had made her miserable, and she begged of him to take back the seal of their engagement.

She might as well have pleaded to a block of stone; then she discovered to whom she had pledged her hand.

He laughed at her pleadings, called her a weak girl, and declared that he would entertain no thoughts that looked to the dissolution of their relationship.

"Go and tell your father all," he almost hissed; "but he will call you the impersonation of silliness, even as I have done. Ah! you know that you dare not go to him with your cause."

The repentant beauty knew all this; her father, dazzled by the diamonds that glistened upon her lover's bosom, was determined that she should become his bride, and when he made up his mind no rock was firmer, none harder than his heart.

"Then let it be as it is willed," cried Ellen. "If you would see the flower droop and die before the coming of the frost take me to the heart that beats for my inheritance, not for me."

Never was a bride elected more unhappy than Ellen Dunning, and in the clouded moments of her bitterness she realized that one error can cause an eternity of heart torture.

The wanning hours drew her nearer the repulsive altar.

"I do wish the moon would shine for ever as beautifully as she shines now. I wish there were no dark clouds to hide her from our sight; for Heaven never created anything fairer than the lovely queen to whom it gave the sceptre of the upper deep. Oh, I shall not sleep to-night until fair Luna has glided from my sight, then perhaps I will drop into dreamland admiring the stars."

As the reader has doubtless surmised, it was a little child that spoke the above sentences, and could he have peeped into one of the upper chambers of Oakhill mansion he would have beheld the little vision of loveliness from whose pure mind the words of praise came.

A little girl was the speaker, and sitting upright in a narrow couch, with her hands clasped upon a book on the broad sill, she continued to gaze upon the dazzling spheres that glistened in the vault of heaven, as perfect and beautiful as they sprang from the mind of their Creator.

Myra Dunning, Ellen's only sister, was a dear little lover of the beautiful and sublime in nature, and many were the chidings she had received for being so enthusiastic on subjects fitted for older minds.

At length, from the celestial planets her gaze flitted downward to the earth, which they bathed in a holy light. She saw the cedaried lawn before her home, and, walking erect down the path, her eyes descried a human figure.

Myra was not alarmed at this, for the shutting of a door had informed her that Gerald Harrison had just left her sister's side, and it was he who was now leaving Oakhill.

But she watched the man as she had never watched him before, and when he left the gate just below the lawn she saw the figure of a woman suddenly appear at his side. The female was clad in black from head to foot, and her appearance caused little Myra to spring from her couch.

But a moment later she was at the window again, gazing upon the pair conversing under the moon.

At length she saw the woman's hand creep from beneath her dark shawl, and she caught the glitter of a ring which she had seen before. Yes, several weeks prior to the present hour, she had seen Gerald Harrison encounter a woman in the grove, and there dashed from the female's finger the scintillations she beheld now.

From her sister's words Myra knew that the woman whom Harrison met was the same one who had estranged Ellen and Herbert Dare.

Presently the little bedchamber was deserted, and with hands clasped in each other the sisters were hurrying in the shade of the cedars towards the figures on the highway.

There lurked something desperate about Ellen's pale, compressed lips, and when they heard the murmur of voices she forced Myra to the ground, and crept forward alone.

The twain stood in the moonlight on the road, and Ellen had no difficulty in recognizing the features of the "woman in black."

Crouched in the shade of a double cedar at the gate, the listener heard words that caused her heart to cease its tumultuous throbings and still itself by the terrible discovery.

"We must look out for him," said Gerald Harrison as he and the woman stepped onwards. "He will not fail when next he catches you. 'Tis twice that you have outwitted him."

While yet the last word lingered on the man's lips a woman's voice caused the pair to pause with startling abruptness.

"Halt!"

The speaker of the command stood before the gate, and in the hand that was extended towards them the twain saw the glittering muzzle of a double-barrelled pistol.

"I have heard enough to convince me of your villainy," said Ellen, with determined emphasis; "but I want your confession of all in black and white. Gerald Harrison, I am a desperate woman all through your machinations. They have caused me hours of bitterness; they have made life a burden, but they must all be unsaid now. That woman is your sister—nobody's wife. All that she told me one year ago is a gigantic falsehood, coined by your lips to break my heart and grasp my gold. Undo all now. Write me a confession of your misdeeds. You have paper and pencil in your pocket; you hat will answer as a desk, the moon your lamp. Now write, or there's no telling what a desperate woman deeply wronged might do."

The twain exchanged glances, and with something that sounded like an imprecation Gerald Harrison knelt in the dust and obeyed Ellen's command.

Then he folded the paper and hurled it at her feet.

"Read it, Myra," said Ellen, still keeping her eye and the pistol directed at the baffled ones.

The little girl obeyed and looked up at her sister. "The confession is complete, Ellen. Was there ever such a plot?"

"Now go, ye baffled ones," cried our heroine. "But hold! your ring!"

She drew the betrothal ring from her finger, and threw it at Gerald Harrison.

He caught it in his hand, and spurned it with an anathema.

The two sisters watched the twain disappear down the road, then they turned away.

"Free at last!" cried Ellen, in the fulness of new joy. "Oh, Myra, I owe all this to thee—to thy love for the celestial worlds. Now let me come; the heart he owned once is his again."

And with the flush of dawn he came to Oakhill, and two hearts beat happily once more.

Herbold Dare came from the historic fields of Grecia, from the sabre of the Moslem whose battle scars he bore, for the turbanned Orientals had been driven from the land, and something—perhaps an oft-repeated dream—had turned his feet towards the woman he loved.

The conspirators escaped for a time, but the officers of justice eventually apprehended them.

The paste diamonds were torn from Gerald Harrison's bosom, and, charged with an old but grave offence, he and his sister found themselves sentenced to a long servitude, through which they could reflect over the past, and, if they wished, repeat of their guilty deeds.

And Ellen made ample atonement for her one great error.

C. E. H.

AN EL DORADO.—An excitement has been raised at San Francisco by a story of the discovery of a district, said to be in some part of Arizona, where rubies, diamonds, and sapphires may be picked up by a party of 25 men at the rate of 200,000*l.* sterling per month. Already three rival companies are disputing for the acquisition of the property, for which the leaders of the movement are understood to require only 800,000*l.* cash. In England the matter has aroused attention, and a circular issued by a firm of London diamond merchants discusses the probable influence of the discovery upon the market.

MR. STANLEY'S SNUFF-BOX.—The snuff-box presented by Her Majesty the Queen to Mr. Stanley is worthy of the occasion. It is not only beautiful in itself but it is a valuable gift, as a royal gift should be. It is an oval-shaped gold box, blue enamel ground. On the lid is a royal crown, set with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, with the royal monogram "V.E." underneath, surrounded by the rose, shamrock, and thistle. The flowers, leaves, and buds of the symbolical plants are diamonds, two of them very large ones. There are fifty diamonds in the setting of the lid, exclusive of those which make up the monogram and surroundings. The box could not have cost less than five or six hundred guineas.

HATS FOR DISPOSAL.—A curious announcement has appeared among the telegrams. A venerable and benevolent old gentleman has seven-and-twenty hats for which he is anxious to find heads, and which, according to his wont, are to be given away. It is true that these hats are not everybody's wear, and thus, perhaps, it happens that they have accumulated on his hands. There was a time when a cardinal's hat brought nothing but ease and dignity to its possessor, but that has not been since the present Pontiff sat upon the throne. The presen-

Pope has made more than eighty cardinals, but a larger number have died during his pontificate. For a Pope more than eighty years of age to make a large number of new cardinals is for him to appoint the constituency which is to elect his successor, and effect a most practical extension of the suffrage.

ITALIAN BRIGANDAGE.—Italy has got to be quite commercial with respect to its brigandage. The military commander of the zone de Marsico-Nuova (Basilicata) has issued the following tariff of prizes for brigands; some of them are valued even to five-pence (50 centimes): Padovani, Joseph, dit le Capucin, 23,515f.; Alano, Frédéric, dit Frangiaro, 21,595f.; Franeolino, Pascal, 6,437f. 50c.; Nasca, Joseph, 6,437f. 50c.; Lanella, Salvator, 5,937f. 50c.; D'Agrosa, Angelo, dit Cacciarello, 5,437f. 50c.; D'Agrosa, Carmine, 5,437f. 50c.; Vaccaro, Carmine, 5,437f. 50c.; Ruggero, François-Antoine, 5,437f. 50c.; Parente, Mario, 300f.—Total, 86,142f. 50c.

CURIOS DISCOVERY AT POERTRE.—During recent alterations made in the Royal Hotel, Portree, the workmen found below the floor of the smoking-room barrel containing a quantity of bones and curiously shaped bottles. On the framework of the barrel being touched it was found utterly decayed. As the hotel at the time of Prince Charlie's escape was the only source whence, situated as it is, provisions could reach the cave where he lay concealed, and whence he ultimately made his escape, it is supposed that this was the means taken to conceal the remains of the provisions forwarded to him. This inn was one of his resting-places in Skye, and the room which he occupied, as well as the cave, is pointed out to tourists.

DISEASED POTATOES.—The Prime Minister has requested the Director of Kew Gardens to give publicity to the method successfully introduced by the late Rev. Professor Henslow into certain villages in Suffolk and elsewhere for utilising diseased potatoes. He says:—"This method depends on the fact that the starch of the potato is not affected by the disease, but retains its nutritive properties, and consists in rasping the peeled tubers upon a bread-grater into a tub of cold water. In a few minutes the starch will be found to have sunk to the bottom, and the diseased matter, woody fibre, etc., will be suspended in the water, and should be poured away with it. Fresh water should then be added, the starch stirred up, and again allowed to settle. Two or three of such washings will remove all impurities, and render the starch fit for use. If thoroughly dried it will keep for any time, and can be used as arrowroot, for puddings and cakes, or, mixed with flour, as bread. A flat piece of tin, prepared as a grater, may be had of a tinsmith for a trifle, and nothing else is required, but a knife and a tub of water. But this temporary measure cannot be all that scientific resources may supply. Surely some method (by desiccation or otherwise) is applicable and available to the cottager by which the sound tubers and the sound parts of diseased tubers may be so treated that they may be preserved for winter use; and I cannot doubt but that chemists will suggest such. Lastly, this season, which has favoured potato disease, has also favoured an abundant crop of green food; and I would urge upon the clergy, medical men, and intelligent classes of the country parishes, combined action, in the way of precept and example, in introducing the beetroot, the foliage of the turnip, and various other vegetables, as an article of daily consumption. Now, too, is the time for laying in stores of such nutritious articles as dried haricots, calavas, and various other pulses and beans which form the cheap, agreeable, and most nutritious food of the populations of many tropical countries."

CORPULLENCE.

We often hear people vaguely talking about getting fat and getting lean, or fattening or losing flesh upon this or that kind of food, but they don't know what they say. Even some of our learned (I) medics and chemists talk about fat as if a person had only to subsist upon starch, sugar, albumen, fat, etc., in different quantities, to become of the dimensions of the "Chaimant," or mere "ruckle of bones," as Dr. Livingstone describes himself when Mr. Stanley found him. It is almost purely a question of temperament, and involves more a knowledge of this subject than of dietetics or chemistry. A man's shape, form, squareness, roundness, tallness, shortness, fatness, or leanness are all dependent upon his temperament, as inherited from and impressed by his parentage and his ancestry. They have little, very little to do with his food.

Along with that the shape of the brain has much to do with it, for certain types of brain do to a certain extent accompany certain types of temperament, or form and strength of body.

The vital or lymphatic temperament is, under all circumstances, and with any kind of food, the most likely to become fat. Such temperaments like plenty of food, and that good, but as it exists

amongst all ranks so it gets all kinds of food, from that which an epicure might relish in to that of the poorest of the poor; both would be fat, though not perhaps equally so. These persons have a predominance of the vital powers, of the digestive apparatus, and their nerves are not too active, so as to become great waste-producers. They are easy and content, hence get fat.

A person with a pure, or even highly predominant nervous temperament, never gets fat. The most prominent and active part of his body in the nervous system; he is all alive, all nervous action; his mind is ever awake; he can't get fat, no matter what he eats, or how much. The less active, or bony and muscular and nervous system there is, and the more lymphatic, the more favourable for getting fat. The less vital, and the nervous or mental high, the less likely to get fat.

CARDINAL WISEMAN.—Cardinal Wiseman, Spurgeon, Macleod, Punshon, the "Chairman," Mark Lemon, and men of that class had or have the vital temperament high, and the osseous and muscular systems less developed. In many cases the brain is large and active, yet at times lazy; such men do love their stomachs, and altogether have the natures for getting fat, and they make the best of them generally.

Small, limber, neatly made men, like J. S. Mill, Archbishop Manning, Mr. Gladstone, Professor Tyndall, C. Dickens, and others, have the mental or nervous temperament highest, hence their cleverness; such men are not usually thin through poverty, yet who ever sees them fat?

It is not their nature, and their systems mould and modify their food, rather than their food moulding and controlling their systems.

The inherent power and quality of food is much, but the inherent power of an organized animal over its food is more. Before a pig, an ox, or a horse, can become a prize for fatness, it must possess a certain blending of temperament, and this is given to it by the process of "breeding".

Men like Lincoln, Wellington, Clyde, Shaftesbury, Disraeli, and others, are of another type: the bilious or motives, they don't get fat; they are too active, too indolent, both mentally and bodily; all their surplus nutrition is worked off. The lymphatic are the lazy, mentally and bodily, in different degrees, of course. The nervous are pre-eminently the active minded, the bilious the active minded and bodied; the last gives the most power of mind, as mind; the lymphatic or vital the least.

HIGH-HEELED BOOTS FOR LADIES.—A London surgeon, Mr. F. Hewlett, reports several cases of serious fractures of limbs indirectly caused by these heels, which had tripped up their wearers; and he refers also to the distortion and injury to the foot that they often induce. He says: "Last year I was sent for to see a young lady in one of our London hotels. She wished to consult me about her foot. On seeing it I thought its state depended upon her boots, and I asked to see them. The boots were brought in by the lady's maid, but the only thing I could observe about them was the immensely high heels. I said: 'It is the high heels of your boots that cause the mischief, and unless you diminish them I can do nothing for you.' She became quite angry, and said she could not alter them. 'I cannot do it and will not.' Suddenly she again toned down, and said: 'Pray, sir, what would people say if they saw me walking about the park without high heels?' I said: 'It is simply heels versus brains. If you have brains, you will cut off the heels; if you have no brains, you will continue to wear them.' She fortunately had brains, cut off the heels, and her foot got quite well."

SAYE'S COURT TRANSFORMATION.—The old historic site of Saye's Court, remembered through its associations with the ancient family of Evelyn, and as a residence of the Czar Peter, during his stay as a shipwright at Deptford Dockyard, is now undergoing a transformation, eight of the fifteen acres of vacant ground around it having been set apart as a public recreation ground for the use of the people of Deptford. Mr. W. J. Evelyn, the present representative of the family of the author of the "Diary," has generously borne the expense of clearing, draining, levelling, and preparing the land for its ultimate purpose, and this week visited and inspected the works now in progress, which are under the superintendence of Mr. Evelyn Liardet. It is understood that should his gift be used in a manner satisfactory to him, Mr. Evelyn will probably allow the remaining portion of the ground to be used similarly. The old Manor House of Saye's Court is to be restored, and will be an interesting object to future visitors; the remains of an old tree planted by Peter the Great being still shown near it, in a portion of what was once the garden of Saye's Court.

STAGE WIGS.—Actors have often been zealous treasurers of theatrical properties and appliances, and some have formed very curious collections of stage wigs. Munden, who was most heedful as to his appearance in the theatre, always provided his own costume, wearing nothing that belonged to the wardrobe of the manager, and giving large sums for any dress that suited his fancy. His wigs were said to be of great antiquity and value; they were in the care of, and daily inspected by, a hair-dresser attached to the theatre. Edwin's biographer records that that actor's "wiggy cost him more than a hundred pounds, and he could boast of having perukes in his collection which had decorated the heads of monarchs, judges, aldermen, philosophers, sailors, jockeys, beauties, thieves, tinkers, and haberdashers." Suett, also a great wig collector, is reported to have assumed on the stage, in the burlesque of Tom Thumb, a large black periwig with flowing curls that had once been the property of Charles II. He had purchased this curious relic at the sale of the effects of a Mr. Rowle, accountant, maker to George III. When the wig was submitted for sale Suett took possession of it, and, putting it on his head, began to bid for it with a gravity that the bystanders found to be irresistibly comical. It was at once declared that the wig should become the actor's property upon his own terms, and it was knocked down to him by the auctioneer. The wig appeared upon the stage during many years, until at last it was destroyed with much other valuable property in the fire which burned to the ground the Birmingham theatre. Suett's grief was extreme. "My wig's gone!" he would say mournfully to everyone he met for some time after the fire. Suett, Mathews, and Knight were at one time reputed to possess the most valuable stocks of wigs in the profession. Knight's collection was valued after his death at £200.

FAC-TILE.

TAXIS.—Taxis is a species of lion which no one is afraid of, and that is the dandy-lion.

TAXES.—There is one thing which can always be found, and that is fault.

An experienced chemist asserts that the manufacture of wine is as reduced to a science that grapes are gradually being dispensed with.

One of the transatlantic railroads has a female locomotive engineer of the beautiful blonde order. She makes the sparks fly.

A Schooner Board member said, "Now, who loves all men?" The question was hardly put before a little girl answered quickly, "Ant Roschel."

An old gentleman from the country, stopping at a first-rate hotel, wrote home that his room was six storeys high, and his bill was three storeys higher than his room.

A man lately started a steam chicken factory with several thousand eggs. The forcing process was carried on so vigorously that only four were hatched, the others being roasted.

"My boy is not unruly!" indignantly exclaimed a mother, whose son had been accused of unruly conduct by his teacher—"he is a good boy, but I admit that he often troubled with a rush of temper to the brain."

One cold morning this month a very pretty girl stopped and bought a paper of a ragged, little Irish newsboy. "Poor fellow," said she, "ain't you very cold?" "I was, ma'am, before you passed," was the reply.

A GEM OF AN ISLAND.—It seems there is some promise of coals coming to us from Ireland. If this promise be realized, the Emerald Isle should change its name, and be called, in richer language, the (Black) Diamond Isle.—*Punch.*

A FRENCH inventor recently made a trial in public of a pair of boots designed to aid one to walk on the water. The boots floated beautifully, but the trifling circumstance that they floated the wrong side up nearly occasioned the death of the inventor.

FACT.—An American doctor asserts that he can make a mustard-plaster of such strength that it will draw the cork of a champagne bottle without nipping the wire. He will probably advertise it in another month as useful to foxhunters for drawing coverts.—*Punch.*

A MAN bitten by a dog declared that he would kill the animal. "But the dog isn't mad," said the owner. "Ain't mad!" thundered the exasperated victim: "what's he got to be mad about, I'd like to know? I'm the one that's entitled to be mad in this business."

"Nice weather for corn," said a minister in the North to one of his parishioners. "Yes," said the old farmer, "but bad for grain and grass." A few days later they met again. "A fine rain we had yesterday," said the minister; "good for grass and grain." "Yes," said the old farmer, "but awful bad for corn."

An alderman was asked to estimate the damage a cow had done in a yard. He did so liberally. He

was then introduced to his own cow as the author of the mischief. This is the same city gent who was seen at his "little place in Surrey" holding an umbrella over him with one hand while he was mowing with the other.

"Do you know," asked an old farmer of a politician, "the difference between yourself and my old speckled hen?" The politician gave it up. "Well," said the old farmer, "the difference is this: she never cracks till she's laid her egg, and you are crackling all the time without overlaying any egg at all."

AYE, ETC., etc.

Clara: "Now, my good man, do go away where you're told."

Honesty Minstrel: "Your good man. Humph, I ain't your good man; that's him a sitting on the seat with—(rather at a loss for a phrase)—with his heys up the chimney!"—*Fun.*

A BOY, six years old, but rather precocious, having been much lectured by his father on the bairiness of crying when any calamity happens, cheered the paternal heart the other morning by saying, "Harry B. cried nearly all day 'cause his father died; but if you should die, papa, I wouldn't cry a bit."

A LITTLE girl who was visiting the family of a neighbour heard them speak of her father as "a widower, and on her return home said, "Pa, are you a widower?" "Yes, my child. Don't you know that your mother is dead?" "Why, yes, I know that mother is dead; but then you always told me you were a Londoner."

Determined Punch.—Two Irishmen on a sultry night took refuge under the bed-clothes from a party of mosquitoes. At last one of them, gasping from heat, ventured to peep beyond the bulwarks, and espied a firefly which had strayed into the room. Arousing his companion with a punch, he said: "Fergus, Fergus, it's no use. Ye might as well come out. Here's one of the craythurs searching for us wid a lantern!"

WOODEN WEDDINGS.—Everybody knows what a golden wedding is; also what a silver wedding means; but a "wooden" wedding is something new. Well, it is the latest Yankee "notion," and is celebrated on the fifth anniversary of marriage. An American paper states that, on the day in question, a Mrs. H. was surprised to see a cartload of wood arrive at the door. The carter handed in the card of an intimate friend of the family, "with compliments of" pencilled over the name, and then proceeded to throw the wood into the lady's cellar. All day long came other messengers, bringing one or more articles of wooden ware, with cards, or little congratulatory notes, until the dining-room was nearly half filled with wooden ware of every imaginable description, from wash-tubs to salad forks and spoons. In the evening the friends and relatives came themselves, when many were the congratulations bestowed upon the worthy couple. Others that did not come sent word that they would if they could. Why not have Wal-aend-and-wad-dings in London during the winter?

"ARE ALL THE BEES MAD?"

Shakespeare.

What sudden ungrammatical fit has seized a genteel public?

Mr. Punch has received during the week about thirty copies of the following advertisement from the *Times*. Some of his correspondents ask what it means, some make bad jokes on ghosts and the like, and all seem to think that there is a mystery. Well, read it:

Quince.—The widow of an officer in the 90th Rifles, who, about 1859, went to Quebec, and there died soon after, will hear of something to her great advantage by applying to Mr. Pollaky, Private Inquiry Office.

There may be a mystery, but *Mr. Punch* fails to perceive it. The announcement is plain English. An officer who went to Quebec, left a widow, whose attention is invited. Where's the muddle? Mr. Pollaky sometimes astonishes us, but here he has simply penned a business-like notification. *Mr. Punch's* opinion regarding certain of the public shall be again Shakesperianically conveyed:

I dare not call them fools, but this I think:
When they are thirsty, fools would fain
have drink.

The fact is, *Mr. Punch* has taught the public to be so critical that it now tries to pick people up before they fall down.—*Punch.*

LIVE donkeys are sold by weight at Tiverton. One was sold at twopence a pound recently and realized 21. 12s. 6d. This is the newest phase of the meat movement.

It has been at length finally and prudently decided there is to be only one Italian Opera-house in Paris for the season of 1872-3, and this one is to be under the direction of M. Verger.

A NOTABLE DISCOVERY.—Some workmen have made an interesting discovery at Dumfries House,

Ayrshire, which was formerly in the possession of the Earls of Kilmarnock. The house now belongs to the Marquis of Bute, and the man, in repairing the roof, found two half-length portraits rolled up and hidden in the rafters. On examination one proved to be the portrait of that Earl of Kilmarnock who was executed for rebellion in 1746; but the other had no name with it and perplexed those who attempted to identify it. Photographs of each were taken, and sent to London to an expert, with the information that in the unnamed picture the nobleman represented wore the Order of the Thistle, with blue ribbon. As the colour of the ribbon of this order was changed from blue to green in 1703 by Queen Anne, it was evident that the picture must have been painted before that date. It was then found that the only person, being a Knight of the Thistle, who could be the subject of the picture, was John Drummond, Earl of Melfort, who was outlawed in 1694, and died at St. Germains in 1714. The fact that these portraits were taken from their frames and thus hidden away forcibly suggests the political perils of former days. And one understands better how widespread these perils were on hearing that another portrait of the same nobleman, which was engraved and published by Vandervliet, was named not Melfort, but Lundin—Lady Melfort's family name—the name of Melfort being unknown.

STAND BY THE RIGHT.

STAND by the right, where'er you be,
In honour place your trust.
Though men may scoff and call you weak,
Still let your every act bespeak
A mind that will be just.

Stand by the right when foes assail!
March! march! with bravery on,
And you shall gain the glorious prize
Which in the future surely lies
For labour nobly done.

Stand by the right, e'en though you find
There's trouble in your path!
Brave is the man who dares to stand
With fearless heart and active hand,
And扫除 the scoffer's wrath.

Stand by the right, and never swerve
From duty's plain decree!
March with the good, and you shall win
Grand victories o'er wrong and sin,
And crush adversity.

Stand by the right, and you will find
Success and honour too;
Stand by the right, the true, the just!
In Heaven place your constant trust—
To manhood ever be true.

Stand by the right! the skies may lower,
The sun may cease to shine,
But you will find that in the storm
Heaven hath placed a blessing warm—
A blessing all divine.

C. D.

GEMS.

VIRTUE is a rock, from which rebound all the arrows shot against it.

He learns much who studies other men, he also learns more who studies himself.

To make punishment efficacious two things are necessary. They must never be disproportioned to the offence, and they must be certain.

BUTTER is he who is above temptation than he who, being tempted, overcomes; since the latter but suppresses the evil inclinations stirring in his breast which the former has not.

THERE are two ways of attaining an important end—force and perseverance. Force fails to the lot only of the privileged few, but sustained perseverance can be practised by the most insignificant. Its silent power grows irresistible with time.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

ICE CREAM.—A cheap and effective mode for the above is to first make a composition of the following: Beat three eggs with half a pound of loaf sugar, till well mixed, then add a pint and a half of milk, and bring to boil on a quick fire, keeping it well stirred. Add half a pint more milk and put it in a cool place, stirring it occasionally. To freeze the same pour the composition into the freezing-pot, which is a vessel made of either pewter or zinc, the latter being much the cheaper, with a lid having a handle over across the top, and watertight; place the pot in a pail, and pack a mixture of rough ice and coarse salt round the pot in the pail so as to bed it in, put a thin sprinkling of salt on top, then cover the ice round with an old flannel, and work the pot containing the composition backwards and forwards for a minute or two. Take the lid off, and

scrape what adheres to the side, and again work the pot round and scrape with a wooden spoon, as before, continuing this process till it becomes the proper consistency, which should be like butter; a little vanilla added greatly adds to the flavour; then throw the melted ice and salt away, replacing with fresh, which will then keep it firm for six hours. For 12 lb. of broken rough ice put 3 lb. or 4 lb. of coarse salt. On no account let any of the ice mixture get in the composition in the freezing-pot or it will never freeze.

STATISTICS.

THE PROFITS OF MINING.—A retrospective glance at the lists of dividends received by capitalists during 1872 out of profits realized from mining enterprises cannot but be the cause of much congratulation; for, taking the first seven months of 1872, we find that the dividends paid amounted to considerably more than double the sum paid in the corresponding months of 1871. The figures for the present year have been—January, 30,857. 5s.; February, 15,819. 4s.; March, 124,754. 1s. 2d.; April, 50,746. 1s. 6d.; May, 68,667. 6s. 8d.; June, 84,397. 4s. 2d.; and July, 61,267. 2s. 8d., equal to 545,021. 1s. 4d. in the aggregate; while the figures for the corresponding months of last year were:—January, 10,758. 1s.; February, 31,455. 1s.; March, 61,228. 1s.; April, 27,605. 5s.; May, 41,017. 1s. 6d.; June, 35,094. 12s. 8d.; and July, 40,604. 10s. 8d.; making but 248,319. 6s. 10d. in all. This position of affairs is the more gratifying because the number of separate mines paying dividends has not largely increased, sufficient time not having yet elapsed to enable the new and suspended mines (which have been set to work in consequence of high prices and the prosperous position of the tin and copper market) to enter the Dividend List; so that it may be anticipated that the difference shown upon the year's workings will be enormous.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PROFESSOR and MRS. Fawcett are on a walking tour in the Alps.

The gypsies have been ordered to pitch their tents outside the fortification walls of Paris.

The Czarowitch and the Prince of Wales are expected in Paris early in October, when a series of fêtes will be given in their honour at the Elysée.

"The 100 Virgins" are making the tour of France. We have not heard of the number of the body-guard.

PRINCE BISMARCK, now residing on his estate at Varzin, is occupying his leisure time in writing his autobiography.

JANUARY next is the period now named for Bazine's trial. The prisoner is in sinking health, suffering from atrophy—though supplied with every nourishment.

The word "love" in the Indian language is "schemelamdauntshwager." How nicely it would sound whispered into a lady's ear—"I schemelamdauntshwager you."

An entirely white lion, says a Chilian paper, has been captured and is exhibited in Buenos Ayres; 2,000. were offered for it by an English merchant in the Zoological Gardens in London.

The Emperor William I. of Germany has a private rent-roll of two million thalers (£200,000). The Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria has hardly any private fortune at all. He generously paid the debts of his brother Maximilian, which consumed nearly all his private means.

The last mail from the Far East not only confirms the intelligence of the visit to Europe, early next spring, of the high and mighty Shah of Persia, but, likewise, still more extraordinary, that of an equally great Eastern potentate, the Mikado of Japan. The latter will travel with a retinue consisting of three vessels of war.

SOMETHING LIKE PEACH-GROWING.—A peach orchard in Maryland contains 1,013 acres. At the height of the past season 600 hands were employed in picking, paring, and canning the fruit, and the daily work was about 4,000 baskets, or 30,000 cans. How in the world do we not in England get a cheaper supply of the preserved article when they must be dirt cheap when an orchard is over 1,000 acres?

THE BURIAL OF Père HYACINTHE.—It is rather unusual for a man to be buried as soon as he is married, but it seems that in a certain sense it is possible. What is called the "funeral" of Père Hyacinthe has already taken place. The explanation is that it is the custom among Roman Catholic religious communities to consider any member that deserts them as dead, and the ceremony of burying him is gone through. This was done at the convent of Dominicans to which M. Hyacinthe Loysen belonged. A coffin was placed in the middle of the chapel, and the customary burial service chanted.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

C. W.—There is but one species of fur peculiar to England, the silver-tipped rabbit of Lincolnshire. The colour of the fur is gray, of different shades, mixed with longer hair tipped with white. This fur is but little used in England, but meets a ready sale in Russia and China.

M. A. T.—The owner of the watch and chain referred to has no claim upon you, for two reasons. You were not liable for the original loss, and, although you were not liable, you made a settlement at the time which being accepted would have been conclusive if you had been liable. If you are so disposed you can recover the amount of the debt subsequently incurred. A County Court plaint would be the method of proceeding.

J. W.—The Temple takes its name from having been founded by the Knights Templars in England. The Templars were crusaders, who, about the year 1118, formed themselves into a military body at Jerusalem, and guarded the roads for the safety of pilgrims. In time, the order became very powerful. The Templars in Fleet Street, in the thirteenth century, frequently entertained the king, the foreign ambassadors, and other great personages.

BRISTOL.—You will find the kind of employment of which you are in search very difficult to obtain unless you have direct acquaintanceship with the heads of the establishments. Their addresses often appear in the advertising columns of the London daily newspapers. The demand for such agents must of necessity be very limited, and we think if you are entirely unacquainted with the employment your chance of obtaining it is exceedingly small, because persons who have acquired experience in some previous capacity are usually chosen.

SUSIE G.—If you turn to your school atlas you will find Rio Janeiro marked on the east side of the map of South America. Rio is the capital city and chief seaport of Brazil, and is described as containing a harbour capable of holding all the navies of the world; a vast ring of purple hills, rising up thousands of feet against the lustrous sky; a wilderness of broad white streets, green sloping ridges, cool shady gardens, tapering church towers, and black frowning rocks, with the huge dark cone of the "Sugar-loaf" looming in the distance like a giant sentinel.

J. S. B.—1. Possibly it may be owing to some orthographical discrepancy that we cannot discover the name of the place you mention in any account of the Irish Rebellion of 1793, or in our Gazetteer. We believe that the successes of the insurgents of those days consisted in the capture of the town of Wexford and the occupation of Vinegar Hill. They also cut in pieces a detachment of cavalry, another of infantry and artillery also in the county of Wexford, and took Enniscorthy by storm; but we do not find such a place as Kilaramon alluded to. 2. The bulk of the 85th regiment appears to be at Calcutta and other places in Bengal; the depot is at Aldershot.

F. S.—It appears from statistics that sixty new fishing smacks were added during the past twelve months to the Grimsby fleet, which now numbers above 400 smacks. Of these 80 are colmen, 65 being "long liners," capable of fishing on the Dogger and carrying crews of ten each, and 15 "hand liners," with crews of six each. It is estimated that 1,200 fishing apprentices belong to the port. The following has been the average price of fish:—Haddock and plaice, 16. a ton; live codfish, 56.; sole, 70.; ling, 28.; lobsters, 100. per ton. The supply last year exceeded 50,000 tons of all kinds of fish, which would average 25. a ton, there being a large excess of plaice, haddock, and herrings.

BACHELOR.—M. Bertillon read at the Academy of Medicine a paper on the relative influence of marriage and celibacy, based on statistical returns derived from France, Belgium, and Holland. In France, taking the ten years 1857-66, he found that, in 1,000 persons aged 25 to 30, 4 deaths occurred in the married, 10.4 in the unmarried, and 22 in widowers; in females at the same age the mortality among the married and unmarried was the same, 9 per 1,000, while in widows it was 17. In persons aged from 30 to 35 the mortality among men was, for the married 11 per 1,000, for the unmarried 5, and for widowers 19 per 1,000; among women, for the married 5, for the unmarried 10, and for widows 15 per 1,000. There appears to be a general agreement of these results of marriage in Belgium and Holland, as well as in France and Paris.

A CLERK (York).—1. 2. and 3. Clerks employed under Government in any capacity are a distinct set of persons from Writers. The latter are copyists merely, the former are often employed as bookkeepers, and as *proofs* writers. 4. The limit of age for most of the clerks employed in the Admiralty is from 17 to 25. The qualification

is the passing satisfactorily an examination in Writing from Dictation, Arithmetic (including Vulgar and Decimal Fractions), English Composition, French Writing, Book-keeping by double entry, Geography, English and General History, Algebra, Euclid, or any branch of Mathematics or Science, Translation from Latin or some modern foreign language. 5. Make a personal application at the offices of the Civil Service Commission in Great George Street, or Cannon Row, Westminster. 6. Your age and circumstances do not appear to disqualify you, but you have not a moment to lose. 7. Apply at the Civil Service Commissioners' Offices, as above.

T. L.—It is not to be expected that within such limit of space as is permitted for an answer to one correspondent we can give you an accurate notion of the methods to procure the various kinds of animals for use as leather, and if we could we would much question, without any printed directions you could arrive at such skill in manipulation as those attain who purchase dexterity by years of apprenticeship and practice at the art and mystery pertaining to a tanner. However, to aid you in your experiments and to gratify a laudable curiosity, we copy from a work of authority one fact for your consideration; thus:—"The hair is removed from kid and goat skins by means of cream of lime, after this fatty matters are got rid of by means of hydrostatic pressure. The skins are then fed with alum and salt in a drum or tumbler made like a huge churn; about 3 lbs. of alum and 4 lbs. of salt being used to 120 lbs. of medium size. When taken out the skins are washed in water, then allowed to ferment in bran and water to remove the surplus alum and salt and to reduce the thickness. They are next dried in a loft and become tough and brittle, but they are made soft and glossy by means of a dressing of 20 lbs. of flour and the yolks of 100 eggs. By rotating the skins in drums for some time the dressing, which is sometimes repeated, is absorbed; the skins are then hung up to dry. Afterwards the skins are dipped into clean water, and placed upon a rounded iron plate fixed to the top of an upright beam. They are finished by being passed over a hot iron."

THE CHRYSAUL AND BUTTERFLY.

With happy smiles upon a face
Whose dimples banished shadows
A sweet girl sought us, laden with
The fragrance of the meadows.
She brought a shining chrysalis;
We told its wondrous story,
And placed it on a rose-tree near,
To show its dawning glory.
With eager haste she came next morn,
To watch her tiny treasure,
Lest daring, wanton hands, perchance,
Should rob her of her pleasure.
And, lo! upon the window ledge,
There lay her shattered idol!
While, toying with the blushing rose,
Arrayed for a bridal.
There shone a brilliant butterfly,
Resplendent in its beauty,
Sipping the rose, as colining sweets
Was all its earthly duty.
Where now the glory of the prize
But yester fondly cherishing?
Ah! robes of all that gave it light,
In one brief night it perished!
The dead hawk pales away from sight;
Hide it beneath green mosses;
Admire its angel and rejoice—
Our crowns are made from crosses. L. S. U.

LEXICON, a good-looking fellow, dark hair and eyes, with whiskers and with expectations, wants to marry a nice, good-looking young lady, tall, with a small fortune.

MAGGIE D., twenty, tall, dark and pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-two, good looking, and in a good position.

ALICE, rather tall, dark hair and eyes, face and figure passable, would make a very loving wife. Respondent must be about thirty, tall, dark, and a mechanic.

T. S., twenty-seven, 5ft 5in., dark hair and eyes, and is a tradesman. Respondent must be about twenty-five, and able to cook well.

JULIA, twenty, medium height, dark complexion and loving. Respondent must be about twenty-four, tall, handsome, loving, fond of home and children, and able to keep a wife.

JOSEPH N., twenty-two, tall, rather stout, light moustache, and able to keep a wife. Respondent must be a servant about nineteen, thoroughly domesticated and able to cook a dinner.

ARTHUR L., twenty-five, 5ft 7in., dark-brown eyes, fair complexion, loving, and a tradesman's son. Respondent must be about nineteen, tall, dark, good figure, and fond of music.

KATE, twenty-three, medium height, brown eyes, loving, and domesticated. Respondent must not be under twenty-four, dark, handsome, fond of home and children; a tradesman preferred.

EMILY S., eighteen, tall, rather pretty, and a good needlewoman. Respondent should be a young tradesman, tall, dark, handsome, well educated, and have a kind disposition.

NELLIE, twenty, average height, light-brown hair, blue eyes, a brunette, good pianist, and loving. Respondent must not be over twenty-three, handsome, and in a good business.

WILL M. would like to marry a little brunet who is not over twenty-five, tall, and accomplished; he is twenty-six, tall, fair complexion, in a good situation, and would make a good husband.

SOPHIE, twenty, average height, dark-brown hair and eyes, fair complexion, accomplished, domesticated and loving. Respondent must be a gentleman in a good position.

CONSTANT READER wishes to marry a respectable young woman, with some means; he is twenty-nine, middle

height, a mechanic, very steady, and would make a good husband.

C. W., twenty, tall, fresh complexion, light-brown hair, gray eyes, in a good position, would like to correspond with a young lady, tall, dark, handsome, fond of music and of home.

WALTER, twenty-two, 5ft. 6in., light-brown hair, and blue eyes, in a small business. Respondent must be a tradesman's daughter, about nineteen, of a loving disposition.

ANNE, a domestic servant, twenty-one, medium height, fair complexion, and not bad looking, would like to meet with a respectable mechanic who would make her a good husband.

ANNE H., nineteen, medium height, fair complexion, brown hair and eyes, rather pretty, wishes to marry a young gentleman of dark complexion, rather tall, and handsome, and in a comfortable situation.

LORRIE F., twenty-two, average height, blue eyes, fair complexion, rather stout, a domestic servant with a loving heart, wishes to marry a tall, fair young man, good looking, and able to keep a wife.

LIVELY LULU, seventeen, tall, dark, handsome, loving, domesticated, fond of home; would make a good wife. Respondent must be dark, good-looking, able to keep a wife, and affectionate.

C. S. G., thirty-five, 5ft. 9in., rather dark complexion, good looking, in a good situation, and would make a respectable young woman comfortable. She must be not over thirty years of age, and domesticated. A respectable servant or a small tradesman's daughter preferred.

LILLY AND ALICE ("Lilly," twenty-one, tall, light-brown hair, blue eyes, and very lively, would like to marry a tradesman, about twenty-eight, tall, dark, and of a loving disposition. "Alice," twenty, dark curly hair, dark eyes, loving, would like to marry a mechanic who is twenty-five, tall, dark, loving, and fond of home.

LONELY TRADEMAN, at present out of business, but about re-embarking, desires to obtain an affectionate partner to assist him in the same; is tall, tolerably handsome, and would make an agreeable husband—age under forty. Would expect the fair respondent to possess a little cash to add to his own.

OLIVER, thirty-five, 5ft. 6in., brown hair, gray eyes, earns 1000. per year. Respondent must be good looking, with blue eyes, black or dark hair, fair complexion, amiable, and of medium height; money of secondary consideration. A lady living near Birmingham or Worcester preferred, from twenty-five to thirty years of age.

VERITAS ET FIDELIS, twenty-six, short, rather dark, a solicitor's clerk, in receipt of fair salary and good prospects, industrious, steady, good tempered, fond of music and of home. Respondent must be inclined to a fair complexion, rather petite, kind, loving, musical, fond of home, and domesticated—a Baptist preferred. Money is a secondary object, but a little would prove acceptable.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

M. E. is responded to by—"M. G." twenty, medium height, domesticated, loving, gray eyes and dark-brown hair.

POLLY by—"H. S." twenty-one, tall, fair, handsome, affectionate, and would make a good husband.

CAROLINE by—"Dispatch," twenty, 5ft. 10in., fair complexion, of a loving disposition, and fond of home.

AND OF CLYDE by—"Alford," twenty-seven, 5ft. 9in., dark hair, gray eyes, in a good position to keep a wife.

CHARLIE by—"Charlie," twenty-three, 5ft. 8in., a silver-smith by trade, with good expectations.

A LOVER OF SAILORS by—"H. L." twenty-six, 5ft. 8in. in the Navy, and fond of children.

STUDYING SAIL JACK by—"L. B." twenty-five, fair complexion, domesticated, and fond of home.

M. W. by—"Polly B." twenty, light hair and eyes, loving, fond of home and children; a native of Nottinghamshire.

ONE IN EARNEST by—"Adeline Ellen," twenty, tall, dark, a tradesman's daughter, good tempered, has been housekeeper in her father's house for six years.

BILL S. by—"Hetty," twenty, middle height, hazel eyes, light hair, of a loving disposition, and domestic servant; and by—"One in Earneast," twenty, medium height, blue eyes, brown hair, and is all he requires.

G. H. by—"Constance S. B." twenty-six, medium height, dark hair and eyes, musical, well educated, very fond of children, and would make a good husband a loving little wife.

JAMES BY—"A. E. A." nineteen, blue eyes and brown hair, a domestic servant, who thinks she would suit him; and by—"Lily Bird," tall fair, light-brown hair, good looking, domesticated, and would like to go to America.

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NOTICE.—Part 113, for OCTOBER, Now Ready, price 6d.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 324, STRAND, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

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